Australian

PENTHOUSE

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THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE FOR MEN

FEBRUARY 1983

WORKING THE LIVE SEX CIRCUIT

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JOHN BELUSHI'S LAST FIVE DAYS

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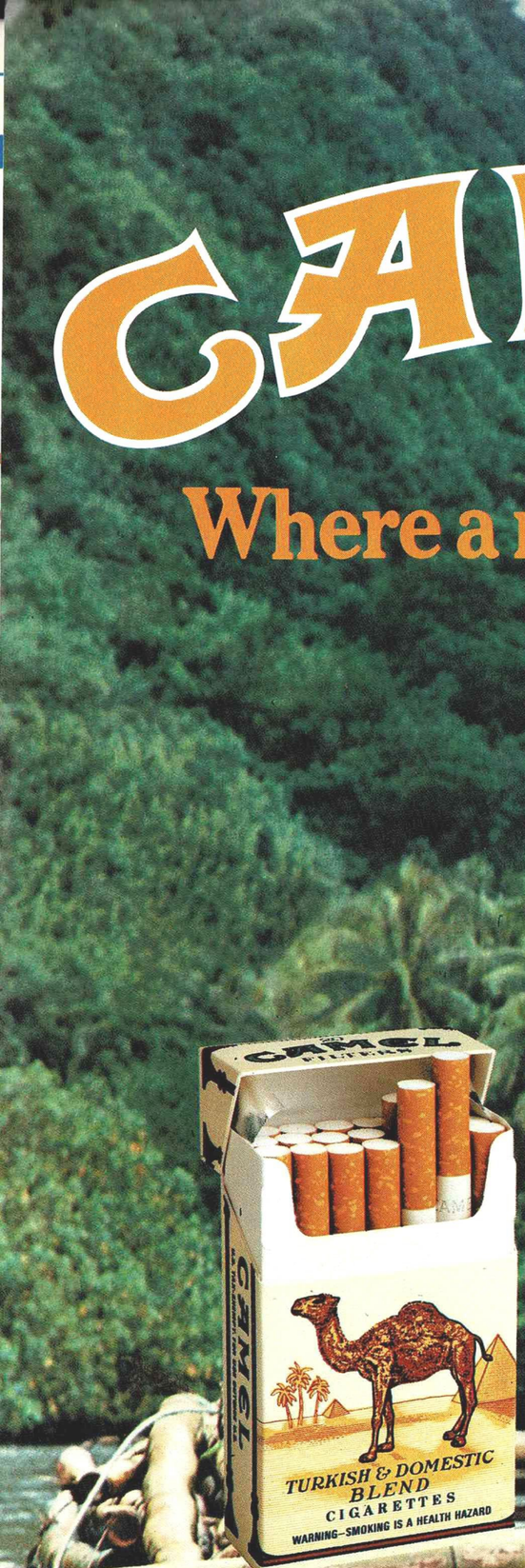

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Australian
PENTHOUSE
The International Magazine for Australian Men/Vol 4 No 3/February 1983

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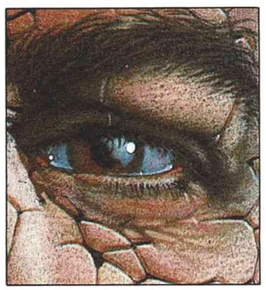
John Belushi's Last Five Days

Treasure Island

Sandy

The Politics of Expediency

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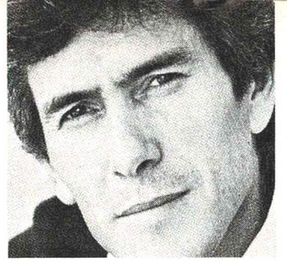

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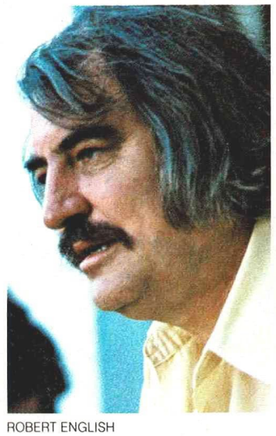

ROBERT ENGLISH

HOUSECALL

Welcome to the bold and beautiful new *Australian Penthouse.* Notice the changes — an upgrading of both printing and paper quality. The magazine looks and feels different. Turn to page 67 and feast your eyes on our scaldingly sensuous Pet of the Month, **Mandy Miller,** photographed by **Chris Dickson.** There is a significant improvement in quality. We've set a new standard and we aim to uphold it.

How does an educated, idealistic young Australian end up screwing his girlfriend half a dozen times a day in front of 300 Japanese men? The answer lies in the current unemployment squeeze, which has forced thousands of Australians into some strange money-making schemes. One particular solution — Sex In Japan — is described on page 34 by **Jack Sayle** with an illustration by **Tony Lunn.** The Japanese live sex circuit is about as low as you can go, but these days, when it comes to finding a job, a lot of people can't afford to be fussy.

Four days after celebrated American comedian John Belushi began injecting himself with cocaine and heroin he was found dead in a Hollywood bungalow. For *Penthouse* reporters **Allan Sonnenschein** and **Jayne Dana,** the discovery of Belushi's body led to a complex six-month investigation involving some famous Hollywood names and some desperate deception on the part of the authorities. The pair soon discovered that the public had been misinformed on almost every aspect of official news coverage. John Belushi's Last Five Days is a gripping and tragic contemporary American drama and a superb piece of investigative reporting. The story, beginning on page 52, is hauntingly illustrated by **Kunio Hagio.**

Forget all the high-minded rhetoric spouted by the Fraser Government in the wake of the tax avoidance scandal. Public morality in Australia has never been in worse shape, as political correspondent **Mungo MacCallum** points out in The Politics of Expediency on page 62, illustrated by **Jenny Coopes.** While exhorting the populace to behave itself in matters of fiscal honesty, Fraser has consistently protected a host of blatant abusers of rank and privilege, to the point where Liberal philosophy in the Eighties could be summed up with: If there's a rort, be in it!

Australia is facing its worst drought since weathermen began keeping rainfall records. Very soon everyone will feel the consequences of the big dry, as supermarket shelves start to look as barren as some cockies' pastures. Until recently, governments have buried their heads in the sand and hoped the problem would resolve itself. But the rain has not come and the damage to the economy is now so profound it cannot be ignored. On page 82, **Robbie Swan** analyses the toll extracted by The Red Landlord and looks at some of the Federal Government's options for drought relief. **Turner-Quirk's** photo illustration sets the scene admirably.

This island continent's brief history is punctuated by bushranging robberies, shipwrecks, gold-rushes and piracy. The legacy of these incidents is a list of lost treasures . . . prizes to be won by those with the bravado and persistence to hunt for them. On page 94 **Geoffrey E. Smith** presents 20 stories of buried treasure in Australia, including well-known legends like the story of Lasseter's Reef and lesser-known tales of buried booty. **Donna Cross** created the map of Treasure Island.

Avante-garde artist Andy Warhol has told us that in the future everyone will be a star for 15 minutes. Thousands of Australians have proved that statement to be true after they've had their moment in the limelight on one of the many prime-time television quiz shows. Lured by the bait of a few fast bucks, *Penthouse* writer **Greg Hunter** took his turn on Tony Barber's *Sale of the Century.* Hunter's hilarious reactions are recorded in High On Money on page 90.

Denis Whitburn continues The *Penthouse* History Of Crime In Australia this month with the story of Joe Borg's bloody demise. Dubbed by tabloid newspapers in the late Sixties as "The King of Sydney Vice", Borg's death in a car bomb blast had a major impact on the Sydney crime scene. A Crime Capital Emerges starts on page 138. Until recently, sex-change operations were surrounded by myths and misinformation. But today, government-sponsored corrective surgery is a common and well-accepted practice. Carlotta, star of the famous Les Girls revue, is Australia's most famous trans-sexual. **Phil Abraham's** conversation with Carlotta, accompanied by **Lorrie Graham's** portrait, starts on page 128. This month's fiction is a bitter-sweet contemporary love story by **Robert English,** titled Sandy, with an illustration by **Georgina Stroud.** It's on page 102. In Advise and Dissent, scriptwriter **Bob Ellis** presents a lament for the Australian film industry . . . a business whose future looked rosy only 12 months ago, but now appears to be doomed as a result of the discovery of an obscure tax loophole.

Penthouse continues its high-quality coverage of the motor sport scene this month with **Peter McKay**'s down to earth summary of the grand prix program . . . a circuit which guzzles money as fast as the Formula Ones burn gas. Gentlemen, Start Your Wallets is on page 120. **Nigel Snowdon** and **Dianna Burnett** shot the photos. Motorcycle correspondent **Noel Christensen** looks at Honda's new array of production bikes in New Light From The Rising Sun on page 143, and concludes that its sophisticated range of machinery puts Honda streets ahead of the competition.

Unless you're blind or stupid, you must have already done a double take over February's Pet of the Month and cover girl **Mandy Miller.** After checking the divine Miss Miller, take three and four with **Monique Gabrielle,** photographed by **Earl Miller,** and voluptuous **Anna Fraley,** brought to you via **Bob Guccione's** misty lens.

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PENTHOUSE FEEDBACK

Is a serious dialogue between readers and editors concerning the editorial content of *Penthouse* — its aspirations and its areas of interest. **Letters for publication should carry name and address** (in capitals, please), although these will be withheld, on request, by the Editor. Send to Penthouse Feedback, Australian Penthouse, PO Box 306, Cammeray, NSW 2062. Views published are not necessarily endorsed editorially.

Meaningful twaddle

After reading "On Turning 40," by Bob Ellis in December *Penthouse*, I thought it one of the finest pieces I have read in your magazine; it expressed poignantly and accurately the feeling of many angry young men who make it to middle age, and brought to mind Bob Hawke saying a few years ago that it becomes harder to be radical as you get older.

I showed the story to my young schoolteacher son and he said it was self-indulgent twaddle; that a man as talented as Ellis was wasting his and the public's time writing laments about his wasted youth.

I hope I'm still around when my son reaches his forties, because I'm saving that story for him to read again then. — *Robert Newell, Mosman, NSW*

Ultra-dangerous

You people must be joking about ultra-light aircraft (October *Penthouse*). If they have such a good safety record I'll bet it's because the number of deaths and injuries aren't correlated to the number of hours flown. Ye gods, any fool can see that normal light aircraft have an appalling safety record, and in my opinion, after 10 years of flying for a commercial airline, it's because of inexperienced pilots and probably some sub-standard maintenance. Are you advocating letting every half-blind, ill-co-ordinated dreamer in Australia loose in tube and wire contraptions which will kill people when they start dropping like flies all over the country?

There's no place for a "freedom buzz" if it's going to cost lives. — *Name and address witheld*

Our plastic pals

Your "Guys and Dolls" story in October *Penthouse* about plastic sex dolls was absolutely disgusting.

Thanks. — *M. Feehan, Adelaide, SA*

I loved your story on blow-up dolls in October. I once was at a party where I was invited to participate in some plastic pleasure and it had the same effect as an icy shower. Your writers should be congratulated on a very funny story, as should David Lyle for his dole-bludging story. Keep up the great humor and please use more cartoons. We all need cheering up! — *R. McCarthy, Potts Point, NSW*

The eyes have it

I would like to congratulate *Australian Penthouse* on Suzanne Masters, the covergirl and centrespread in the December issue. Where on earth did you find such a bombshell?

She is easily the horniest looking lady you have ever had (and I've got every issue over the last three years). She's so different from your usual photo spreads; even though your Aussie Pets have got away from that American ideal of a soft-focus photo of a tall lady with long hair, huge boobs and a Californian suntan, Suzanne is something else altogether, mostly because of those incredibly sexy green eyes. She's the first Australian Pet I've seen that I wouldn't mind seeing fully clothed; a glimpse of her ankles and a flash of those sultry eyes and she could have me any way she wanted. — *Jim Carson, Sydney, NSW*

Fair go for nudists

I thoroughly enjoyed the story by Dr Magnus Clarke on nudism in December *Penthouse*, and felt I should write to congratulate you on once again covering a subject fairly and in depth, instead of taking the hysterical approach that all of our country's newspapers seem to prefer these days.

I am not a member of a nudist club and although I have been to a few free beaches and have no worries about dropping my strides, I often feel angry and insulted by the attitueds that most publications show toward subjects like nudism.

Dr Clarke's story, while concentrating on the sexuality of nudism, treats the subject honestly and I think it shows a thoroughly professional approach, because it is factual and obviously well-researched.

Nudism is an interesting subject, because society is catching up with the idea of social nudity faster and faster, as the acceptance of topless bathing and the ever more popular free beaches all around Australia prove. I personally feel that nudist clubs are a waste of time, but accept that people who draw strength from numbers and who like to belong to a club find them worthwhile.

I wouldn't be at all offended by public nudism under any circumstances — although I agree that Australia isn't quite ready for a girl walking across main city streets nude in peak hour — and I think that newspapers and magazines which run page three bikini girls and sniggery stories about nudists should be subjected to a gutter journalism tax. — *Name and address withheld*

Golden oldies

My wife and I are regular readers of your magazine. Over the years we have noticed all your photographic models seem to range in age from 24 years downwards. There are many beautiful women much older than this and we would like to see pictorials of these women. It seems a shame to concentrate your artistic efforts on such a narrow age-group when we're sure all your readers would appreciate and enjoy a more balanced view of the female form.

Speaking of the female form — why is it you are no longer including men in your pictorials? — *Morgan and Angela Taylor-Halpin, Harvey Bay, Qld*

As to the first request, there seems to be a consensus that 18-year-old women tend to be more alluring than 50-year-old ones. We at Penthouse *tend to agree. Secondly, there were never any men included in pictorials in* Australian Penthouse. *Who needs them?* — Ed

Moffat insight

The interview with Alan Moffat in October *Penthouse* was one of the best I have read. I am not what you'd call a car racing nut — although I do read most of the car magazines — but that interview was the first thing I have read about Moffat which gives a real insight into what makes the man tick.

Like most other people who only know the drivers through the way they are portrayed in the press, I admired Moffat for his obvious skill, but always thought of him as the villain — cold, ruthless, grumpy and egotistical. I now realise that these impressions were caused by the media's mistaken interpretation of Moffat's motivation; the man is a dedicated, meticulous professional.

I was disappointed that he didn't win at Bathurst, but his performances during the year, and the insight your interview gave, now make me agree totally with his answer when you asked him who was the best touring car driver in Australia: "I think you talking to him." — *Mike Andrews, Cremorne, NSW*

Give it to us

I'm sure that you and your staff are aware of the poor standard of publications available for women. It seems that the male population is more than adequately catered for in this respect.

I'm sure that I speak for a great number of women who would welcome a women's magazine that did not cater solely for the adolescent sector. It seems high time that someone thought seriously about publishing an interesting magazine for women.

Most men are quick enough to jump to the defence of so-called "Girlie" magazines, saying that the articles are very interesting — that's fine and I couldn't agree more — but surely the explicit pictures also contained therein have some attraction! Well, what's so different about the male body? To females, it is beautiful and exciting and if the well-used saying that the human body is beautiful and should be seen, in its entirety, is to be applied in the case of men's magazines, then it's equal rights time!

Maybe the problem is that most men are too shy to reveal all in front of a camera. That would possibly account for the fact that male centrefolds expose less of themselves than is seen at the beach. American *Penthouse* attempted to close the gap with their counterpart *Viva*, which was a great hit with the women until the explicit pictures were discontinued and Australian distribution all but halted.

Maybe *Australian Penthouse* could consider launching a magazine that, if it at all resembled the present male issues, should be a best-selling magazine for Australian women. After all, we're the ones giving the men the enjoyment, so how about a little in return? — *A. Davies, Sylvania, NSW*

We agree entirely with these sentiments — but the history of sophisticated women's magazines like Viva *and* Nova *is anything but encouraging. Both the target audience and the advertisers will not support them; all have wound up in a financial bind. So until a larger class of sophisticated intelligent women emerges in this country, it looks like you're stuck with the same old rubbish. Still, Charles and Diana do make a lovely couple.* — Ed

Darling, be mine

I've always thought showing off showed immaturity, but after seeing Sheena Sorensen (December *Penthouse*), give me a show-off any time!

The lady is a mind-blower! Pardon my exclamation marks, but wow! Tell her I promise not to forget her name and call her a sheila and that I meet her dream requirements in that I'm wealthy enough to whisk her around the world and I have the credentials to provide a sizzling affair. How could any man not sizzle with just a glance at that face and body! — *Name and address withheld*

Come of it. No amount of exclamation marks will gèt you her address, but try the Greek Islands around April. — Ed

Don't get serious

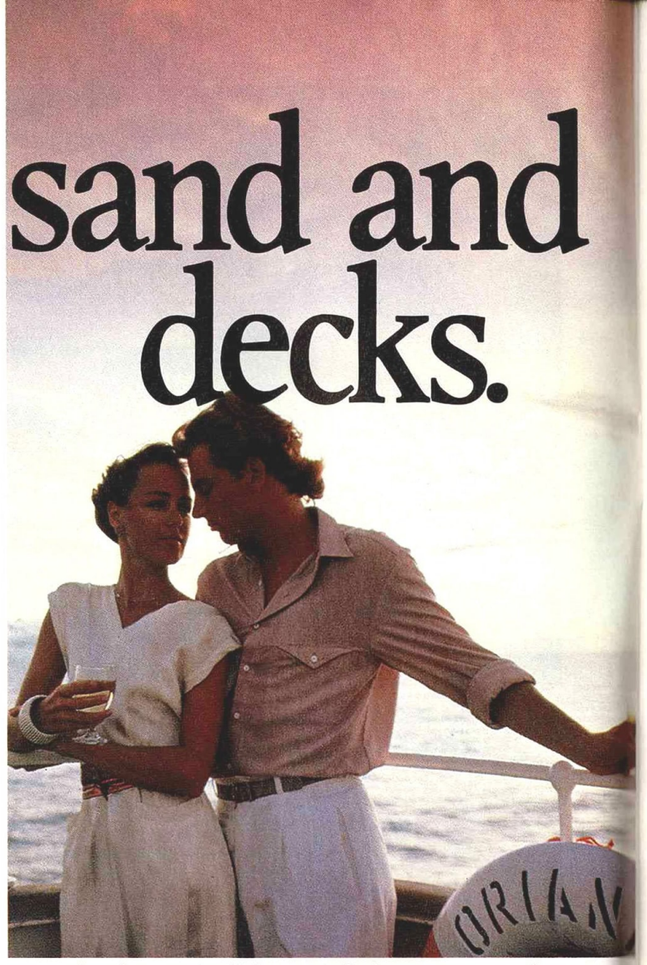
I wish *Australian Penthouse* would print more humor stories and less depressing serious stuff. Every bloody day every bloody publication you see is full of serious analyses of serious subjects: war, death, unemployment, murder, the road toll, drunk driving, sexual diseases, rotten TV shows, rotten politicians, rotten food . . . No wonder there are so many suicides. If you don't take on the job of cheering people up more seriously, I won't be responsible for my actions; I might do something serious. — *H. Stone, Paddington, NSW*

Ad nauseum

You people should be banned because of all the sick jokes you print. What sort of weirdos do you dredge up to create some of those cartoons, and where are they locked away at night? I just hope it's not within coo-ee of me, because if I ever met one of those bent bastards I'd probably throw up on his arty-farty Jesus sandals. — *M. Watkins, Essenden, Victoria*

Oops, looks like we've let another one slip by us. — Ed

Sun, sea, sand and decks.



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Ode to nine

My job with a large corporation brings me into contact with lots of handsome and distinguished men. I recently had a terribly exciting experience with one of them that I would like to share with your readers.

Ever since I took over my job, I have been casting an interested eye in the direction of a guy who works on the same floor as I do. To say that he is attractive is like saying that Frankenstein is merely ugly. Every woman who works on our floor literally stares at him and would like to take a tumble in the sack with him. He is tall, has the biggest hands I've ever seen, dark and unbelievably sexy, and has an absolutely perfect body, which includes buttocks that look good enough to eat. His voice alone could melt butter. His well-endowed crotch is always boldly evident in his form-fitting slacks. A good friend of mine said she actually had an orgasm one day just by watching him walk down the hall.

You can imagine my delight when Tom asked me if I would like to go out with him for a night of dinner, drinks and dancing. I gladly accepted, even though he is 12 years older than I am. He's 39 and I'm 27.

We went to a small, elegant restaurant and got a cozy table in a dimly lit corner. I couldn't take my eyes off of him the whole time we ate. By the time he led me to the dance floor we were practially making out right there at our table. As we danced I couldn't believe what was happening to me. He is a great dancer and smelled so fantastic I was ready to rape him. I could tell he was turned on, too. Finally, I practically begged him to take me to his place and screw me.

When we arrived at his house we both knew what we wanted, so he immediately led me to his large bedroom and took me in his arms, and we embraced in the most passionate kiss of my life. We frantically tore off each other's clothes and then just stood and stared at each other for a few seconds in the candlelit bedroom. He is absolutely the sexiest man imaginable. His broad chest has a beautiful mat of dark body hair, just as I expected, and he has the biggest, most beautiful penis imaginable! It is 22 centimentres long and so thick that the head is the size of a pool ball. I lost my breath for a second because I never knew a man could be so big and I wondered if I could take it without pain.

We both got down on the bed and began exploring each other's bodies with our hands, lips, and tongues. He really knows how to turn a woman on. Before I knew what was happening we were in a 69 position and his tongue was driving me insane with pleasure. I could accommodate only a small section of his big cock, but I ministered to it gratefully, and suddenly we both exploded in a beautiful orgasm and I found myself drinking every delicious drop of his hot semen.

Afterward, we lay in each other's arms making small talk and lightly caressing each other until his cock grew hard in my hands. No more foreplay was necessary, because I was overwhelmed with desire for this tremendously handsome and virile man and my pussy literally ached for him. Even though I was wet with desire, he still had trouble before the extremely huge head of his cock at last slid into me. I screamed out in pleasure and brief pain as he slowly slid his magnificent cock in. Then he teased me for what seemed like hours, just working a small part in and out of my burning pussy. Then suddenly without warning, he began pounding in and out of me with authority, thrusting a little deeper and harder every few strokes. I could feel the huge head massaging and stretching me as he screwed me good and hard.

Finally I exploded in the most fantastic orgasm ever. I've heard of multiple orgasms, but this was a continual orgasm. When I finally came back to reality he was still screwing me with slow, precise strokes. His staying power was unbelievable, and I almost passed out from the intensity of our lovemaking. Then without warning, again he began pounding his gigantic cock in and out with increased rhythm and depth. This time he was literally driving me into the bed with the force of his strokes, using all of his enormous cock and every muscle in his body. I could feel this fantastic prick way up inside of me where nothing had ever been before, and the feeling was incredible. I was about to explode again and I could tell he was working toward his orgasm, when suddenly I felt his horse cock jerk and spew his burning load into me and I exploded in another terrific orgasm at the same time.

We got up the next morning and had another go at it while showering together. It was even better than the night before, if you can believe it. Women who say that the size of a man's cock isn't important

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FEBRUARY

must be crazy, because if a man has a big dick like Tom's and can use it like he can, it makes for the best sex in the world! — *Name and address withheld*

Blown out

I would like to tell your readers about something that happened to me several weeks ago. I still think of how much pleasure I had from this experience.

Late one night I was tending bar and was there by myself. Business was slow, so I was about to close when this young lady came in for a few drinks. She said that she had had an argument with her boyfriend and had to get away from him for a while. I thought to myself, all I need is someone crying on my shoulder. After a few drinks this girl was loaded and it was now closing time. I told her that she would have to leave. She said that she had had too much to drink and couldn't drive home. She asked me if I would take her home and told me if I did that she would reward me with something special. Being single and horny, I thought this would be a great idea.

When we got to her apartment we went in and she locked and chained the door. She fixed us both a drink and then she went into the bedroom. Several minutes later she returned wearing only a short nightie and no panties. Just the sight of her turned me on. I became erect at once.

She told me to finish up my drink, go into the bedroom, get undressed, and wait for her on the bed. She went into the bathroom and I into the bedroom. I heard water running in the bathroom and thought that she was washing her face, trying to sober up.

I was trying to figure out what was taking her so long and that was when I found out. She came into the bedroom carrying the largest hot water bottle that I had ever seen. On the hose she had attached a large douche nozzle. She then told me that my special reward for bringing her home was going to be the best blowjob that I had ever had.

She had me raise my legs and spread them so that she could insert that long nozzle. At first she only inserted it a little way, then she released the clamp to start the enema. After a few seconds she shut off the clamp and began to slowly work the nozzle in and out, each time putting in it deeper. Soon it was all the way in. You would not believe how great that felt to me. She climbed onto the bed with me and slowly worked her way down to my now throbbing cock. As her mouth engulfed the head of my cock she released the clamp on the hose to start the flow of that large, hot enema.

As the hot water slowly filled my bowels, the feeling in my cock intensified. I could not believe how hard my cock had become as she slowly worked her head up and down. I tried to hold back my climax as long as possible to enjoy and savor the pleasure of that large enema and the joy of a good headjob.

Finally I reached the point of no return. My cock jerked and spurted time after time. All the while she was working on me and pumping me full of hot enema water.

After she finished, she let me up to use the bathroom to expel the water and clean up. After that enema and a good headjob I could not believe how great I felt. She had truly given me the best blowjob I had ever had. That was quite an experience, and I hope to get together with her again sometime. — *Name and address withheld*

Self-expression

Either I'm a prude or teaching isn't a very exciting field in which to find sex partners. Up until three weeks ago I hadn't had a sexual encounter beyond light petting. Then again, teaching university doesn't automatically expose you to the kind of females that a 28-year-old like myself would be interested in. So I've done my job, run over French exercises, and drilled students each day for many years.

But this spring an attractive 18-year-old student entered my class. I was immediately attracted to her . . . and I think she felt the same.

There was nothing sexual about the attraction at first, She was very bright, cute, and a little overweight, and she helped me very enthusiastically with all my classroom duties. I began to have lunch with her and generally just found her a joy.

About halfway through the semester, when I began to give tests, I was sitting at my desk, watching the students pore over exams, when I noticed Leslie (that's her name). She was wearing a rather short skirt, with her legs slightly parted. I couldn't believe it, but I swore I could see pubic hairs where her pudgy thighs met.

I looked away, half out of embarrassment and half to see if anyone else noticed. When I looked back she had crossed her legs and I almost fainted. Never had I had such a feeling. My body became flushed and I gaped at her. My eyes were riveted to the pink line running between her thighs. I don't know how long I stared at her, but the class bell almost put me through the ceiling. I asked, in a very hoarse voice, that the students pass their tests forward, but Leslie jumped up and said, "I'll collect them."

Leslie collected the papers, brought them to my desk, and cheerily said, "I'll see you tomorrow, Mr Glenn," and then bounced out of the room.

I never spent a more restless night in my life. I tossed and turned, angry at myself for getting excited over this odd situation, but I couldn't wait until the next day.

After three days of this, with my lessons going down the drain, I decided to pay her

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mother a visit and tell her what was going on. After all, Leslie was so oblivious to her actions, maybe it was accidental.

At 4.30 that afternoon I drove up to a small fibro house on a quiet block. The door was answered by a very attractive blonde woman in her early 40s, and I introduced myself as Leslie's teacher.

"Oh, yes," she said, "Leslie has told me so much about you. Please call me Maggie." She led me to a very traditional living room and we both sat on the couch. "Now what brings you here, Mr Glenn? Is Leslie doing all right in her studies?" "Yes . . . it's just that . . . well, I don't know how to tell you this. It's just that for a few days now, Leslie hasn't been wearing any panties, and with her short skirts her pubic hair is very evident."

Leslie's mother looked a bit surprised and then called upstairs. Leslie bounced down the stairs and sat on a stuffed chair opposite her mother and me. Her mother asked, "Leslie, Mr Glenn said that you've been showing yourself in class. Is that true?"

"Yes, Mum. But it's because I like Mr Glenn so much and wanted to get closer to him." In my shock, I turned to Leslie's mother, who tried to comfort me. She said "Since my husband died, I've always told Leslie to express herself fully, but it has been a little embarrassing at times. She really is trying to show you how much she likes you. See, she's doing it now!"

I looked over at Leslie and was transfixed. Her legs were drawn up on the chair and she was slowly massaging her clit with her finger.

"Leslie really likes you, Mr Glenn. Why don't you show her how much you like her?" She helped me to my feet, hiked up my shirt, and pulled down my pants. I didn't even start to resist. She sat me down with my pants down around my knees and let her hand slide between my thighs. I only felt this, because my eyes were watching Leslie's finger slide in and out of her own pussy.

"You look like you want to see Leslie up close. Why not kneel down in front of her?" I felt like a robot. My body moved across the room, but my mind was way ahead of it. I knelt down in front of Leslie as she moved forward on the seat, then slowly moved my face between her thighs until she put her finger in my mouth. I sucked on it, smelling her aroma. Then I pushed it out and buried my face in her pussy. I couldn't even think. My head was spinning. Suddenly, Leslie pulled my face from between her legs and said, "Lie down, Mr Glenn. Please."

She brought my head gently to her pussy and then crouched over me to place that jewel of wonderful aromas right on my lips. My head may have been on the floor, but my mind was totally in the clouds. I grabbed her arse and pulled her harder and harder against my lips. I wanted to eat her whole being.

At that moment, I felt her mother's mouth sucking on my cock and for the first time in my entire life I really felt like opening myself up to anything that might happen. It wasn't more than 20 seconds before her tongue made me gush forth with the most powerful ejaculation.

Since that time we have had after-school "study groups" almost every day.
— Name and address withheld

"Oh, Wilbur, my body aches for you!"

She's found her niche

I know a lot of people refuse to even admit that the idea of sado-masochism is a sexual turn-on, even though there is an element of S and M in every sexual encounter. I shed my own inhibitions some time ego and this led me to a relationship which has made my life a joy.

My relationship started two summers ago. I was having a drink with a very old friend. Partly because of the alcohol and partly because Keith was such a trusted friend, I confessed that I had long fantasised about an S and M relationship ever since I read the *Story of O.* I was 23 when I first mentioned it to him, and very attractive, with a 34-22-35 figure and deep-brown hair. I didn't think much of our conversation at the time, but the next time I saw Keith we were sipping a drink at his apartment and he managed to trick me into wearing handcuffs. Once I was tied up, he stripped me and screwed me, and I was well on the way to acting out all my fantasies.

I'll skip most of the day-to-day details of my training. Suffice it to say that I soon moved in with Keith and had to follow a set of rules. These were: when I'm out in public with Keith, I cannot wear a bra or panties, and I usually have to wear a skirt so Keith can have access to my pussy; in the house I must always wear spike-heeled shoes with knee socks, but otherwise I'm nude; I am responsible for all the cleaning, in which case I wear a small apron; and I must always do what Keith tells me, or else I will be spanked.

Many of your readers will find this hard to believe, but we don't have sex every day in spite of the fact that I must always be available for it. Some days, though, we will be sitting wathing TV, when he'll order me to suck his cock, perhaps with special instructions, such as to let it come in my face or hold his cock just outside my mouth so he can watch it squirt down my throat.

About three months ago Keith told me that he wanted to expand our relationship to a threesome. At first I was a little hurt, but Keith told me I was to select a girl for us to seduce. I decided upon Jane almost by accident.

You see, I have smallish nipples, but they are very pointy when I'm turned on.

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FORUM

They were quite visible beneath my T-shirt when I met Jane, who was selling me some earrings in her jewellery store. I told her that I would need piercing to wear them and Jane said that that could be done at the rear of the shop. I sat down in the little room where the piercing was done, and I knew Jane had caught a glimpse of my naked twat under my skirt. But she was really surprised when I lifted my T-shirt and told her it was my nipples that were to be pierced. She tried to act cool, but I knew she was nervous about touching my tits when she pierced my nipples. I tried to make her feel at ease by telling her the joys of my relationship with Keith.

Later on, I told Keith that I wanted Jane to be the third in our relationship. We seduced her by seeing her every week to buy more earrings. I always struck up a conversation with her, and after a month or so she became quite friendly. Because she had always been interested in my relationship with Keith, I invited her back to the house to see what it was like first hand, although it was only after the third invitation that she accepted.

When we got to the house, I knew I had to get into my outfit of spiked shoes and kneesocks, but I was embarrassed to do this in front of Jane. No one had ever seen me as a slave before except Keith. Jane was a bit nervous, but we tried to keep the evening as normal as possible, apart from the fact that I was virtually nude. Keith ordered me to fix and serve drinks, which I did, and then I returned from the kitchen wearing a large hooped earring through each nipple.

We chatted as we drank, and Keith made me tell Jane that our relationship was really quite normal in all regards, but that my personality was such that I had to be a total sexual slave. Jane was very interested but found it all rather difficult to comprehend. She was young, just 21, and did not believe that I had to do whatever Keith ordered.

Later in the evening I dropped a wineglass and I knew I would have to be punished. The evening was coming to a close anyway, and Keith told Jane that he would be punishing me. But he said, "Since you've been so interested in our relationship, you can stay to watch Rita get punished if you like. You don't have to worry about getting involved, though."

As I feared, Jane chose to stay. I had to assume my usual position, lying lengthwise along a long, wide sofa arm. My arse was at the very end, one leg over one side on the floor and the other stretched over the cushions on the seat. My arms were pulled out in front of me and cuffed to a loop in the wall. Keith invited Jane to watch the blows administered, but before he started he pointed out how this position exposed not only my arse but also my pussy. I felt his fingers on my pussy lips as he told Jane, "See how her inner lips are getting puffed out, and notice the little drops of twat juice. You can see how she enjoys this."

Then with a loud smack, his hand came down on my arse. My whole body jerked and I whimpered a bit. Just over my shoulder I could see Keith really lean into the blows. Blow after blow rained down on my arse, and I was really turning on. Keith showed Jane how wet my snatch was getting. From my position I could just barely see Jane. I noticed her biting her lip and wincing slightly with the sound of each spank. Her arms were crossed over her chest, and in each hand she held a tit and massaged them through her blouse. After 30 spankings my punishment stopped. Keith explained that I needed a little tenderness at this point and Jane chose to leave.

I wondered what Jane thought of all that, but the next weekend when I went to the jewellery store she asked if she could come and visit us again.

She came over that evening, and it began much as did the last one. She asked more questions about our relationship, still finding it difficult to believe that I was a total slave. Keith finally said to her, "Jane, you seem very interested, so here is a proposition. Rita is a slave and she needs guidance and discipline. I am her master, but if you like you can be mistress." I had always thought Keith wanted her to be an equal slave, and I was humiliated to think that she would be my mistress. Jane was unsure of herself, but Keith pointed out how much she enjoyed watching me being disciplined and told her that she could discipline me in the future. Jane was intrigued but uncertain.

Keith told me to show Jane how good a slave I could be. I walked over and sat beside her, running my hands through her hair. "Can I make Rita do whatever I want?" she asked. When Keith said yes, she looked at me with a steely glint in her green eyes and told me to spread my legs and masturbate in front of her. As I did, she gave me more commands, such as to stick my finger in my pussy and get it wet and then lick it clean. "Is that the first time you've tasted pussy?" she asked. I mumbled yes, and yes again when she asked me if it tasted good. "Then do it again," she commanded over and over. When I finally came, Keith told Jane the rules if she wanted to join us.

Like me, she could not wear a bra or panties in public, and her 37-23-34 body would have to be kept nude around the house. She had to follow Keith's orders and could be disciplined, but she had the extra advantage of knowing that although she was Keith's slave, I was a slave to both of them.

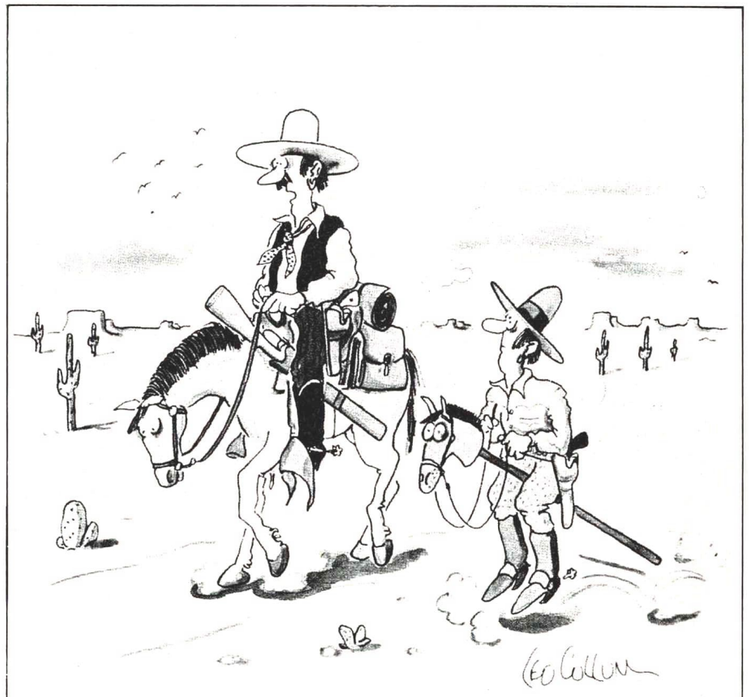
Keith told me to undress Jane, which I did. As I was slipping off her very wet panties, Keith told Jane, "I think our slave should make you feel welcome in your new home." He looked at me and gave me a two-word order: "Eat her!" I had never licked a pussy before, and as I later found out, Jane had never had her twat licked. She looked nervous as Keith pushed my head toward her. He pulled Jane's legs apart, and I began licking at her slit. At first I didn't like it, but I soon began to enjoy her taste. I could feel her begin to twitch, and as I looked up at her I could see her hands massaging her big tits. I found her clit, and she was soon coming.

Jane disciplined me two days later, although I can't remember what for. Keith watched as she spanked me. When she finished, he reminded her that I needed some tenderness after my punishment. She asked him what she should do, because she wasn't a lesbian and didn't want to eat me. Keith said the standard tender treatment was a good fucking.

The next day he presented Jane with a strap-on dildo especially for this purpose. She strapped it on and gently spread my cunt lips as she eased it into me. Slowly her hands ran up my body, squeezing my tits and showing her latent tendencies. Then she began rooting me. About a week later, she gave up fighting it all together, and after spanking me once she left me tied up and began to finger-screw me. But when it came time for my tenderness she wouldn't eat me.

Keith is a good master, and he knew that was what I wanted. Usually I am allowed to have what I want when it is my turn for nice treatment. He ordered Jane to eat me. She refused, and got her first taste of discipline instead. After he finished, he ate her and screwed her, ordering me to suck on her big tits. As I was sucking on her she ran her hands through my hair and finally pulled me to her and kissed me. Keith told her I still needed something more from her, and she ate me.

Since Jane came to live with us, that is pretty much what life is like at the house. In some ways, she is better than Keith because she understands my need to feel humiliated better than he does. Just last night she and Keith invited three other couples over to the house for dinner. Jane and I are allowed to wear clothes when other people come over. After the meal, Jane said we were going to get a treat. Then she ordered me to sit up on the table and lift my skirt, revealing that I wore no panties. What a conversation stopper! She served liquor and told me to masturbate while everyone watched. As they sipped their drinks, the squishy sound became louder as my fingers danced through my wet slit and clit. Jane invited them all to touch me and feel me coming. One guy actually had the nerve and got up and did it. Because I was so humiliated, I practically exploded when I came. After



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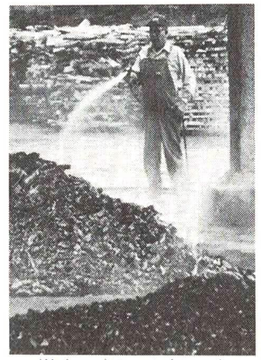

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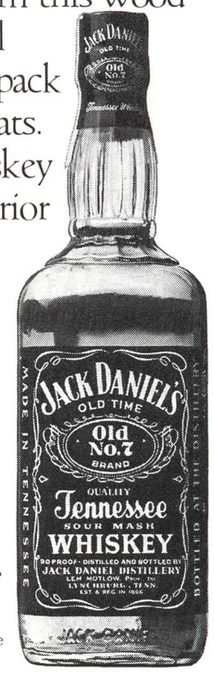

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Loads of features at a reasonable price.

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TOCP0768

FORUM

we left the table, one girl came up to me and said she found my show so exciting that she almost came herself. Jane heard her and told her she could take me upstairs and I would eat her if she wanted.

I love my S and M life. Jane and Keith are very good to me and show me off only to very close friends. I've learned a lot over the past two years, and if any lady reading this letter thinks I'm crazy, she ought to try it first. Then she'll know how exciting it can be. — *Name and address withheld*

Home movies

Just recently my wildest sex fantasy came true. Alice and I are a married couple in our thirties. Recently we became good friends with John and Barbara, who are about our age. My wife and I found them to be a very attractive and interesting couple. We discussed swinging and thought John and Barbara would be a perfect match for us. We were very reluctant to bring up the subject, though, because we had no idea what their reaction might be.

I had recently bought a video camera, and this proved to be the opener. One night we somehow got around to talking about porno movies we had seen. I brought out my video camera and said, "Why don't we make our own?" They jumped at the idea. Evidently, they had been discussing the same subject. We all agreed to have some fun. Into the bedroom we went and stripped. We decided we would film it just like the movies, with come shots, etc. After some discussion, John and Alice were chosen to start.

Alice is very small, slender, with what is described as a "cute figure." She has small, firm breasts. John is tall and slim with a generous-sized prick. I got the camera ready, and John and Alice got on the bed. I filmed and Barbara sat on a chair near the bed and watched. John and Alice began to make love. He sucked her tits and rubbed her pussy. Then he went down between her legs and tongued her. It was extremely hot to watch my wife do this. I had a wild desire to jerk off as I watched. Barbara was already rubbing herself at the sight. Alice was writhing and moaning and began to groan, "Faster, harder, watch me!" Suddenly she flung her legs out, pressed against John, and yelled wildly as she came. Her face was twisted with pleasure. She then took John's very stiff cock into her mouth and slowly, but enthusiastically, sucked. He was moaning now. After this she mounted him, sliding his glistening prick into her once again. She worked slowly up and down in a way that made me think she had forgotten the camera.

Alice got off and lay on her back as John got on top of her. I could tell they were about to come. John's arse was pumping up and down furiously. Suddenly Alice wrapped her legs around John and began to heave. Then John pulled his prick out, held it over Alice, and jerked it wildly in his hand. His whole body quivered as he, too, yelled out. He shot out spurt after spurt all over Alice. All of a sudden, we heard more yelling. I turned, and there was Barbara coming like mad.

It was now my turn. Barbara is taller than Alice, with medium tits and a fantastic arse. We began to make love as John filmed. We sucked each other for a while, but then Barbara got on top of me and we began to screw. She was hot as hell and made the wildest faces. Then she turned around, still on top of me, and continued. I was holding her arse and watching it pump and moaning with delight. Suddenly her arse began to pump wildly up and down. I couldn't see her face, but I could hear her yelling. I was too hot to pull out. I grabbed her arse and pushed deeper and shot my come into her.

After a while we experimented with different things. The filming became less important as we didn't need the excuse to get together. But let me tell you, swinging is great! — *Name and address withheld*

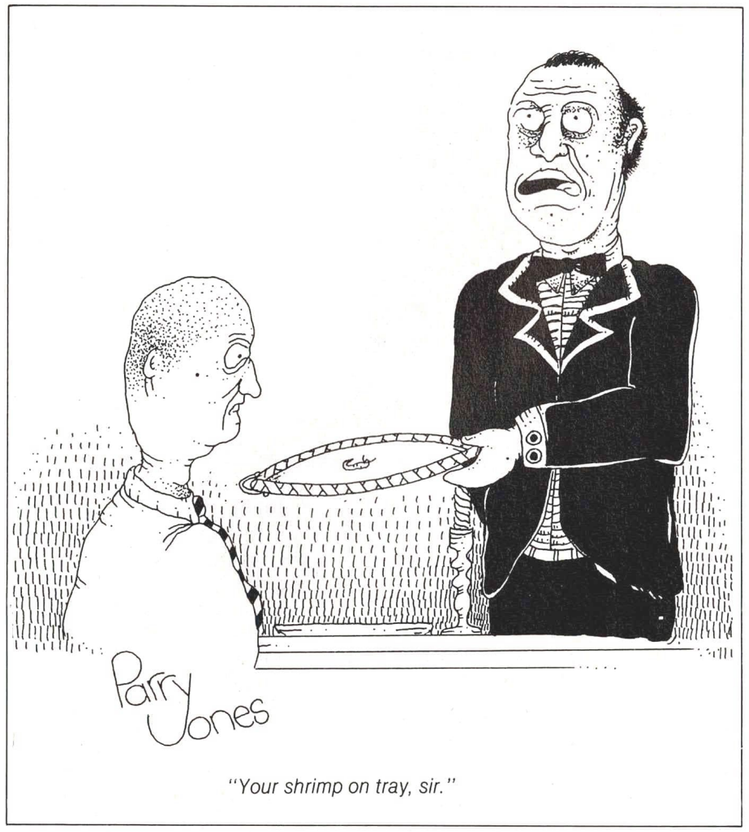
Style-conscious guy

Reading with enthusiasm your articles on the men who are coming out into the open and declaring their desire to wear lingerie has done wonders for my husband and me. Ned first started wearing my panties when we played around at night in bed, and feeling his hard cock, stretching the limits of the black nylon bikini panties was really a turn-on for me, having a wish for many years that he would throw away his terrible, ugly cotton briefs. From this small beginning, I have purchased for Ned many pairs of panties, a dozen or so pairs of sheer nylon tap pants, and finally two of the most darling mini-slips. He now wouldn't have it any other way and loves his lingerie. Recently, Ned suggested he go for the panty hose as well. Now his erect, hard cock is always exposed to me under his nylon, nude, and sheer-to-the-waist panty hose.

At first Ned was embarrassed, but as he and I got used to his newfound toys, we both began to relax with our lingerie.

He fills out his tall panty hose very nicely and, I must admit, sexually excites me beyond belief. I have found, much to my surprise, that I can't get into his crotch as quickly now but love to watch him extend himself as I masturbate him.

My girl friend at the office where I work knows about Ned and says she has found herself getting excited as she thinks about seeing him wearing his panty hose around the house, and wants someday for me to bring her over so the three of us can display our sheer-to-the-waist bodies. Ned has agreed to this without hesitation as long as we are not off limits to each other. — *Name and address withheld*



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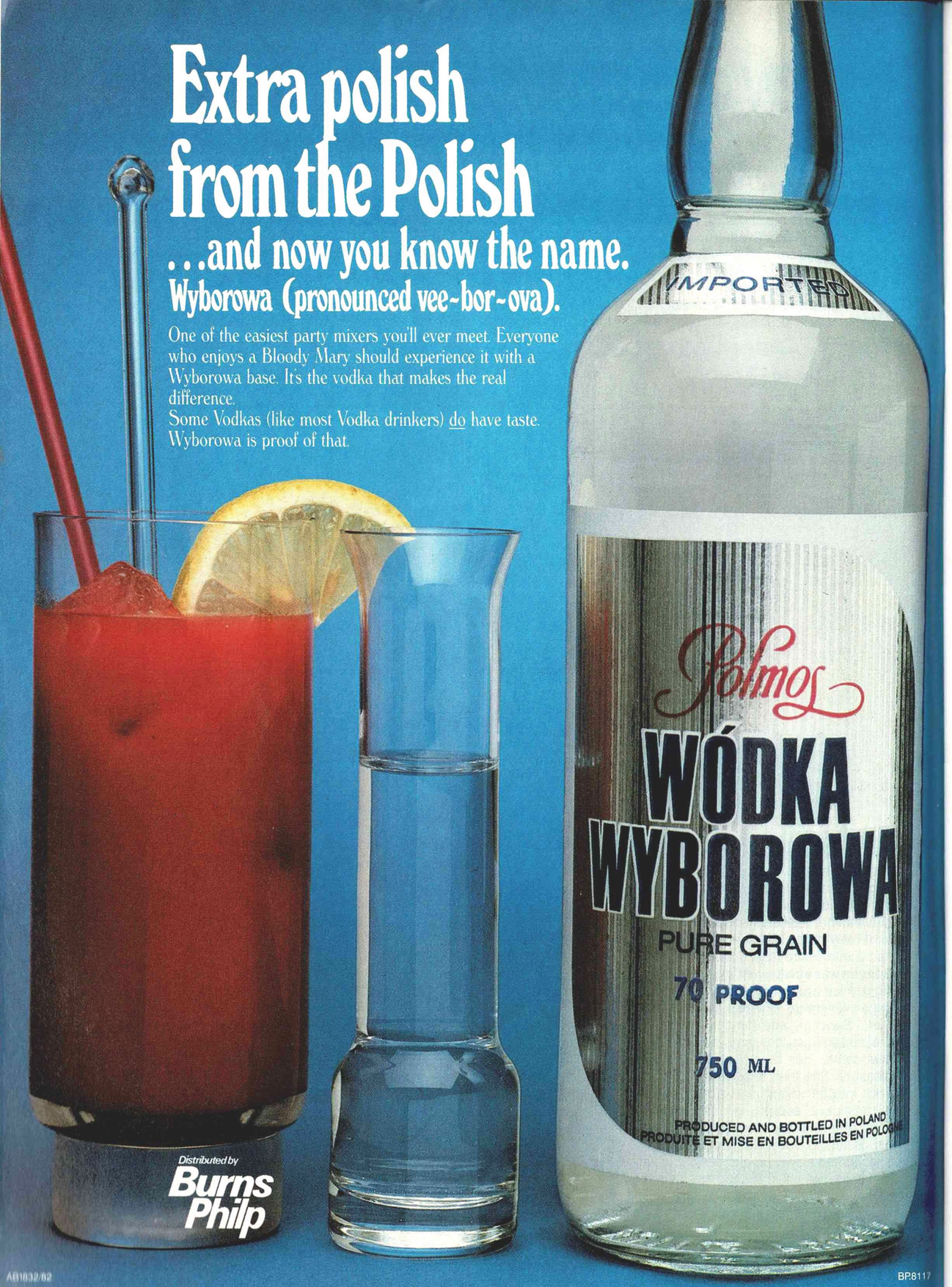

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In ancient times distilling wine was the domain of a very restricted group of people, and the production of alcohol a closely guarded secret.

Between the 11th and 14th centuries the art of distilling alcohol from wine progressed slowly. The final product — spirit with a low alcohol content — was used as an expensive and infallible medicine for all types of ailments, and by the 15th century was being more widely used simply as a beyerage.

It was at this time that the purely Polish word "vodka", diminutive of water (woda) originates.

The beverage grew in popularity more rapidly after the 16th century, when a method was devised to derive it from grain, chiefly rye. Rye vodka, the most widely produced brand in those times, was known as "okowita" (aqua vitae).

In 1546, under a statute decreed by King Jan Olbracht, every inhabitant of Poland was free to produce and sell liquors. Then, under a law enacted in 1572 the Polish gentry secured the so-called "propinatory privilege" implying three exclusive rights: to produce liquors, to sell them, and to force the peasantry to drink in the squire's inn. The trade in vodka then became one of the major sources of revenue for the squirearchy and the Crown.

In addition to tariffs, there was a special "tap tax", passed by the Parliament in the 17th century as a 10% tax on production and sale of vodka, beer and mead.

Rapid growth of an industry

How widespread the distilling of vodka became is indicated by notes in contemporary diaries. In 1595, the Reverend Hieronim Prowodowski wrote severely, "Breweries and distilleries have sprung everywhere, and have decocted not only grain but also whole villages and towns."

Because primitive apparatus made derivation of neat spirit impossible, the vodka very strongly smacked of the raw material from which it was obtained. Hence, to improve its taste, and suppress the unpleasant taste of crude alcohol, distillers added aromatic oils, spices and herbs, and honey as a sweetener.

And because the distilling of vodka was very remunerative, the distilleries expanded despite wars and destruction of the period.

Liquors produced in Poland were frequently the subject of comment by visitors to the country. In 1568, Fulvius Ruggieri, described in letters to Rome the details of production of excellent vodka.

Galeario Marescotti, describing the life and manners of the Polish Royal Court in the late 17th century, noted "they drink a great deal of beer, mead and vodka".

Obviously Polish vodka made an impression on international tourists and diplomats. Part of the reason may be ascribed to proverbial Polish hospitality, which made it a point of honour for a host to entertain his guests with as much cordial welcome, food and drink as possible. Home-made vodka would undoubtedly have occupied a place of honour on the table.

Such traditional hospitality contributed to competition among distillers, and resulted in a great diversification of vodka brands. All of them were — and indeed, are — famous for their fine quality, and are praised by gourmets throughout the world.

The industry expanded most quickly in the 19th century, when more vodka and liqueur companies were founded. Technical improvements followed, with improved apparatus, the application of steam in the rectification processes, and steam engines in the distilleries. New raw materials were also used, including potatoes and beet treacle. This in turn brought new and more efficient technological processes.

The present-day spirits industry has thus been built on age-old traditions and experiences. The supreme quality of Polish vodka is thus based on continuing experiment and knowledge.

Following the first World War, the State Spirits Monopoly was established, supervising production based on perfecting those traditional technological methods in production of spirits and vodka.

After the conclusion of World War II, the State Spirits Monopoly was re-established and the industry reconstructed after the damages of war. Production was modernised and concentrated, yielding highest quality products.

The quality is recognised not only by the numerous medals won in international exhibitions, but also by the much-quoted saying of Pablo Picasso: "the three most astonishing things in the past half-century were the blues, cubism and Polish vodka".

Today's Polish vodka, spirits and liqueurs are exported under the trademark Polmos, which guarantees the standard of excellence of the beverages.

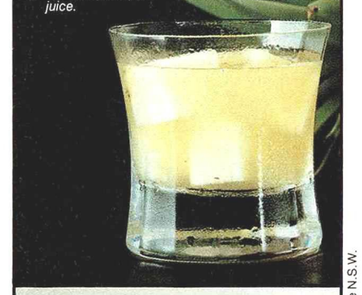
WÓDKA WYBOROWA
distributed by **Burns Philp**

POLISH CLOVER

Ingredients
45ml Wyborowa Vodka
30ml Baileys Irish Cream
Dash of Creme De Menthe
Method
1. *Shake over ice and strain.*

YELLOW ROCK ROAD

Ingredients
30ml Wyborowa Vodka
20ml Creme De Cacao (White)
15ml Roncoco
60ml Pineapple Juice
Method
1. *Pour all ingredients over ice.*
2. *Top with pineapple juice.*



PARISIANNE SCREWDRIVER

Ingredients
30ml Wyborowa Vodka
30ml Cointreu
15ml Lime Juice
Top with Orange Juice
Method
1. *Shake with ice.*
2. *Strain in glass and top with orange juice.*
3. *Garnish small lime wedge and orange spiral and lime spiral.*

Cocktails created by Cocktail Bar Tenders Hilton International, Sydney Airport, Arncliffe N.S.W.

AB 1927/82 BP 1146

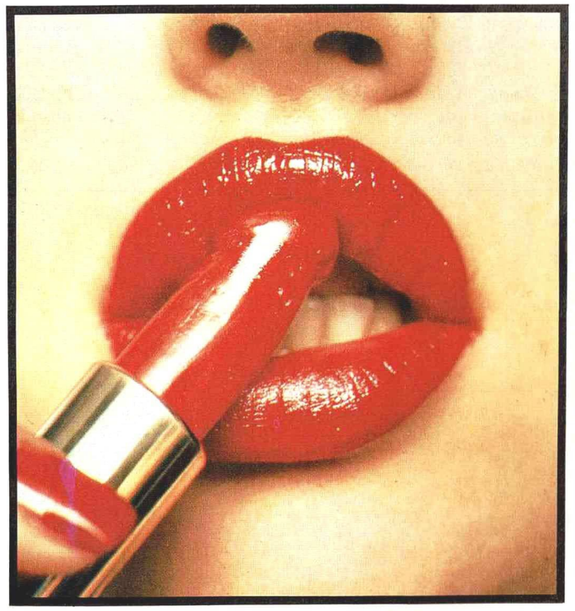
"If a girl is easy, that's one thing. But to go to the extreme of becoming everybody's sex slave sounds ridiculous"

XAVIERA HOLLANDER

CALL ME MADAM

LETTER OF THE MONTH

My name is Gail. I've been married for four years. Both my husband and I have good jobs. I'm a secretary in a small firm. I'm 25, blonde, and a physical fitness nut. My problem was and is that my husband John is a workaholic. Ever since our marriage our sex life has steadily deteriorated. Don't get me wrong — I love John. But he is so determined to get ahead it leaves little time for us together. I tried everything — from sexy underwear to being damned aggressive — but found it only left me frustrated or unsatisfied from John's slam-bam-thank-you-ma'am style of lovemaking.



I guess my boss must have read all the signs, because one day he was dictating to me in his office one minute and the next he was pounding his cockmeat into my snatch. I felt almost like a virgin. It had been so long since I'd been screwed. That afternoon in Herb's office was a delight, and I actually experienced my first orgasm. I couldn't wait for repeat performances.

The next day at work Herb even had a gift for me. When I opened the box I found a choke collar, which Herb said I would wear from that day forward as a sign I was his sex slave. I would obey his commands without question. Well, I didn't see anything wrong with this. After all, I just had the best sex I'd ever had. Anyhow, Herb's first order was for me to suck on his cock, which I did without hesitation. When he came, it was the sweetest cream I'd ever tasted. My pussy ached, but Herb said I must learn to be a patient slave. From his desk drawer he pulled out a dildo to fill the void in my love canal. I didn't want to offend my master, so I worked the dildo back and forth, and as I did that I saw that Herb was masturbating. He encouraged me to work it in and out, faster and faster. I had a tremendous climax. As I came back down Herb was standing over me jacking off, and he started shooting his sperm all over my body. Then he had me rub it into my skin.

This went on for the first two weeks, with Herb allowing me only to suck him off and then use the dildo. Herb also wanted me to dress sexier at work. He preferred the plunging neckline on dresses because it revealed more of my large bosoms, and he preferred the open back, so I went braless. A must was high heels — "the higher the better," as Herb would say. Herb also liked the low-cut dresses because he felt it showed off the choke collar more.

Anyhow, into the third week Herb told me that since I had been a good little slave, he would screw me. With that he had me strip down, spread my legs, and bend over his desk top. I had to bite my tongue to stop from yelling, it felt so good. It was simply fantastic feeling him expand inside me and then release his love juices. After this Herb referred to me as his good little cocksucking whore.

Well, I continued to care for my master in this way for several weeks, and then late one night I found myself in a complex situation. Here I was, bent over Herb's desk, with my legs spread and just high heels on, and guess who walks into the office — the president of the firm and three other executives, all of whom were sporting erections, which led me to believe I was set up. Well, there I was with Herb slamming into me, and the president comes up and pulls out his cock and thrusts it into my face. I opened my mouth like a good slave and sucked so hard that the president came in my mouth within a minute. Peter, another executive, took his place, and then Malcolm took Herb's place, and it was just a sexual marathon that lasted for several hours.

Now I have quite a few masters at work. I received a nice raise

and the president has even told me I'll be entertaining some prospective clients. Talk about going from one extreme to the other! — G.S.

What you are quickly becoming, if you continue being screwed around by your bosses and their friends, is a free hooker who will eventually be the laughing stock of everybody. If a girl is easy, that's one thing. But to go to the extreme of becoming everyone's sex slave sounds a bit ridiculous.

In the vocation of prostitution, what they gave you as a raise would probably be considered a rude tip. Maybe you ought to change your profession and become a paid hooker.

JAILBIRD LAYS CHICK

I am a 19-year-old male presently incarcerated. This is my first time ever in jail, and I'm doing a one-year sentence. Since I've come to jail, I've been an avid reader of Penthouse *and especially of your column. I have ventured back into my most memorable experience and would like to share it with you.*

I often fantasised about a lovely classmate of mine, and luckily I was eventually introduced to her by friends. By chance one evening I bumped into her at a local store and invited her to my house for a drink. On the way home she might have noticed how nervous I was, for I was still a virgin. Upon reaching my house, we had some innocent necking and a little foreplay.

After several weeks of dating, I asked her if she would like to go on a weekend camping trip with me and my parents. She accepted.

The first day turned out to be quite dismal. When my parents decided to play cards with other campers, Kim and I went for a walk in the light rain. While walking, we came upon a graveyard of junk cars. Upon our inspection and to our delight, we found an old sedan that offered us comfort and shelter from the rain. After a moment of talk, our lips met in a heat of passion and her hands headed for the buckle of my belt.

The head of my throbbing cock appeared as I lay back. After she pulled off my pants with anticipatory lust, her lips and tongue began licking and sucking on the head of my shaft. I then started to feel a tingling sensation that covered my entire body and caused me to have a mind-boggling orgasm. I then turned to her to disrobe her and gazed with burning eyes upon her luscious, firm breasts and started to caress her stiffened nipples with my tongue. I began rubbing her inner thighs with my hand while sucking on her very hard nipples. She started moaning with delight and squirming like a snake as I rolled my thumb and forefinger around her clitoris. I felt her pouring her hot love juices all over my hand. By this time I was rock hard again and ready to climb in and have my first real screw. I then slid on top of her and put my elbows on each side of her head. Her legs were spread wide and the smell of her love juices was driving me crazy with desire. She grabbed my cock and put it at the entrance of her hot love box. When I stuck the head of my probe into her awaiting love nest, it was like heaven. I immediately pushed it in to the hilt. I humped her slowly until she started screaming "Faster, faster!" I quickened my pace until we both exploded with devastating orgasms.

We have now been "together" for three years while I have been incarcerated. She writes me that she still truly loves me, but she is finding it very difficult to stay true to me.

I've told her if she can't stay true to me, she doesn't love me and never did. — G.J.

What do you expect your poor girl friend to do? Sit home and masturbate for three years?

Be reasonable. She is a young woman with a healthy sexual appetite. Of course she still loves you, but if you keep restricting her from having affairs, even if it is merely for sexual relief, you may well lose her altogether.

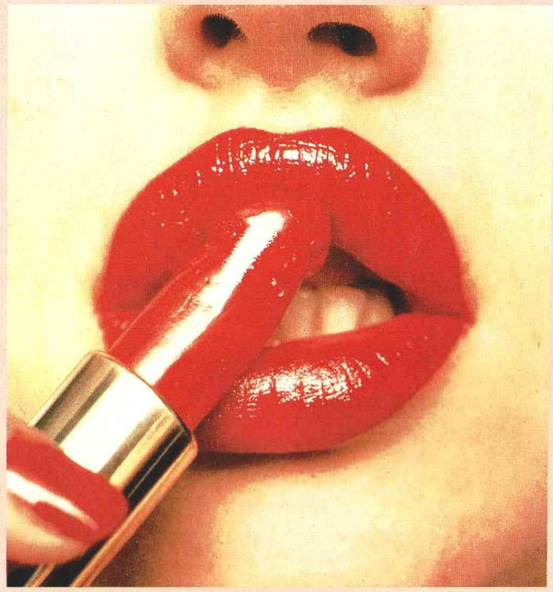
"I wish we'd never signed that strategic arms limitation treaty!"

MAIL ORDER OFFER

XAVIERA'S SUPERSEX

her personal techniques for total lovemaking

XAVIERA HOLLANDER
author of the world-famous **HAPPY HOOKER**



Xaviera Hollander has proved that practice has made perfect, and she's gone all the way to make this luscious, ultra-erotic book in the art of lovemaking her crowning achievement. Here is the most intimately knowledgeable tour through the world of sex ever offered by someone who has tried it all and loves to tell about it. Here you will find everything your heart (and other parts of your body) could desire in learning how many sensual possibilities are available to men and women of every sexual taste and level of expertise. Here, in fact, is the great new, lavishly illustrated bedside companion that is the next best thing to having Xaviera there herself!

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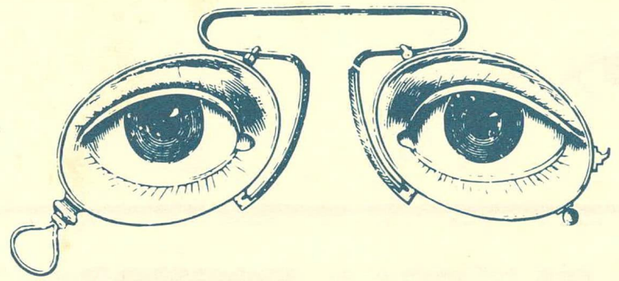


GETTING RID OF FRIENDS AND LOVERS

BY NICK TOSCHES

That old blowhard Samuel Johnson was right when, more than two centuries ago, he remarked that "life has no pleasure higher or nobler than that of friendship." But true friends area rare and elusive quarry, and many of us pass our lives without bagging a one of them. Indeed, many of those whom we regard as our friends are nothing more than ships in the night lashed burdensomely to the moorings of our kind and beneficent greatness.

In the light of this cold, hard fact of life, we are wise to stand back and evaluate the situation before embarking on any relationship that threatens to end in friendship. Scrutinising our potential friend, we must take certain questions into consideration. Does he give us money? Lots of it? Does he regard our sundry godlike attributes with proper reverence? Would he die for us? Without the impropriety of being asked to do so?

If we can answer these questions in the affirmative, we may rest assured that we have found, as surely as Dr Johnson his Boswell, a true friend. (I myself was fortunate to have such a friend, a fair young lady. Alas, these past several years she has been cloistered in a vast-lawned institution, and I have known the pangs of emptiness. Now and then, I receive watercolors bearing one of her several signatures and depicting symbolic scenes from the life of Jackie Gleason, somewhat after the fashion of the Stations of the Cross. The hope that we will someday be reunited, lawnlessly, is, along with an occasional quinella hit, the only thing that keeps me going.)

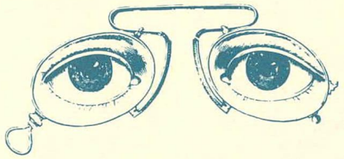
If, on the other hand, we find ourselves answering any of these questions in the negative, we must face the fact that the person we are dealing with is incapable of true friendship. He is a selfish person. He is, in the parlance of modern psychology and country-and-western lyrics, a user. Through our hearts beseech us otherwise, we must extract his grubby hands from the alms basket of our gracious fellowship.

The problem is, how to get rid of our so-called friends. If like myself, you are á nice person, you find it extremely difficult simply to tell someone to take a long walk off a short pier. And, while diminutive doctors with shiny foreheads have in recent years produced a surfeit of books that tell us how to make friends, nowhere can we turn for professional advice on how to rid ourselves of same. This is a situation begging to be remedied, and it is toward that end that I light this candle, meagre but bold, in the great darkness of silence.

Most friends, one discovers early in life, suffer periodic crises, caused by on-the-blink biorhythms, too many reruns, the loss of a loved one or a contact lens, Milk Arrowroot crumbs in the underwear, or any number of life's other trials. These crises are intense, often shattering experiences for our friends; but, while not without a certain and slight value as entertainment, they are ultimately a bore for us. Such crises, however, afford us the most opportune circumstances in which to free ourselves from the fetters of friendship. I offer the following exemplum, drawn from truth.

I, in my generosity and goodness, had been ruthlessly victimised by a self-confessed friend for longer than I care to remember. He had drunk my water, used countless sheets of my toilet tissue, engaged me repeatedly in conversation, and twice used my telephone to call his country town mother. I tried everthing — dropped casual slurs directed toward his ethnic persuasion, forbade him to address me by my Christian name in public, time and again asked his blonde wife if her cuffs matched her collar — yet I could not rid myself of him. Then, at long last, God had mercy on me. His blonde wife left him, and he suffered a crisis of splendid proportions. I seized the opportunity and assured him that things were bound to get worse. His crisis came to a head, and he began to hint at suicidal fancies. Finally, he called me at three in the morning and lamented that he simply did not know what to do with his life. In a compassionate voice, I suggested that he end it — but not before absolving me of having cock-

Illustration by Michael Fitzjames



comforted his estranged wife. I then resumed my viewing of "The Astro-Zombies" on Channel 9; and I have not heard from him since. While it is true that I was taken advantage of, I can console myself with the fact that whatever I lost in toilet tissue, I gained eight-fold in wisdom. Even more troublesome than our so-called friends are our lovers, as we have been taught to refer to those lucky people into whom we deign to stick our dicks (or by whom we deign to be stuck, as the case may be).

There is much to be said in praise of coitus. Not having to wipe one's hand afterward comes immediately to mind (especially in these days of ever rising toilet-tissue prices); and I

The old grapefruit trick

am sure that there are other aspects of equal merit. We must, however, face the fact that repeated coitus with the same person often has the effect of bringing us closer together with that person. This togetherness, which Dear Abby occasionally calls love, is a wondrous thing while it lasts — for months or even years, as in rare cases such as that of Patti and Bert. But within every selfless lover lurks a potential friend, an individual clawing to assert his or her own will; and it is only a matter of time before that beast within bursts forth to shatter the idyll of true love.

In trying to rid oneself of a lover, one should always remember to avoid rational arguments. Work directly on the neurotic nexus. (It's right near the clitoris. You'll find it if you poke around enough.) If one's lover is of the female persuasion, it is advantageous to draw attention to the signs of her ageing. Notice how her breasts have begun to deflate — but, in so noticing, remind her always that you love her still. Remark that her child-bearing years are dwindling, and in the next breath that you are into the shylock for six grand. If she is near the age of 30, praise her for growing old with dignity. If these devices fail to drive one's lover into the arms of the next sucker, it is time to haul out the big guns.

Perhaps milady has trouble in achieving orgasm. If so, make jest of the problem, especially among company. If milady has copious orgasms, inform her, with as much sensitivity as you can muster, that they aren't real orgasms. While lying atop her in the heat of lust, comment on a facial blemish that you've just noticed. After sexual congress, especially fellatio, make a great display of washing your generative organ. (Similarly, after cunnilingus, of flossing, brushing, and gargling.) If all else fails, confess to her your innermost desire: "I want to fuck your mother."

But the problem is never-ending. No sooner do we shake loose a friend or a lover, it seems, before another presents itself. The phone rings. We speak. Our toilet tissue begins once again to vanish at an alarming rate. We are slowly but ineluctably drawn into a new menstrual cycle, and, before we know it, we are made to suffer distractions from our viewing habits in order to read in soft blue eyes what silent love hath writ.

Ultimately, perhaps, all we can do is tell ourselves, over and over, that such is life among friends, lovers, and nice people like us.

Pass the toilet paper.

SOUNDS

INXS SUCCESS

INXS have produced their strongest-sounding collection yet with *Shabooh Shoobah* (Regular/WEA). The title is a Middle Eastern version of "abracadabra" but the Sydney-based sextet pull no radical surprises from their top hats. They rely on and refine the magic previously demonstrated live and on vinyl. Last year's *Underneath The Colours* (Deluxe) saw producer Richard Clapton achieve a mix that was strongly danceable, yet sparse and soft around the edges. Here Mark Opitz (their third producer in as many albums) has helped put more bite into the rhythm sections and guitars. The sax also raucously interjects, especially on the first single "The One Thing". Keyboards maintain some of their soft focus but Michael Hutchence's vocals come through loud and clear. He is obviously gaining in larynx control and rolls some words around his mouth with a rough familiarity, letting them drip languidly on the eager young (female) ears in the front row. The only real disappointment is the subject matter. Ten love songs, albeit avoiding many of the cliches of such an idiom, make for a fairly one-dimensional statement which is thankfully diffused by the variety and quality of the music.

INXS have always made a point of putting non-album tracks on the singles' B-sides and the first two, "The One Thing" and "Don't Change", are no exception. Another commendable marketing move is the inclusion of a facsimile of the inner sleeve, complete with lyrics (although fairly illegible), with the cassette of the album. Still, lads, as an overall sound "don't change a thing for me".

Within the context of Genesis, **Peter Gabriel** was a rampant little thespian, with elaborate costume and stage presentations. Genesis have gone on to produce, especially recently, some of their best, least indulgent material incorporating Phil Collins' (drummer and lead singer) penchant for R&B horn ensembles. Gabriel himself has gone in a more rythmic, though brooding, direction. His work with Genesis is obviously a distant memory, as witnessed by a recent Genesis reunion where he'd been unable to find copies of old albums and had problems remembering words while on stage. *Peter Gabriel* (Charisma) is his fourth solo effort and offers two more sides of his private poetry recorded "at home". At times he is evocative to the point of being obscure, yet still creates such strong moods that you feel revelation is just one more play away. He is aided and abetted by many varied synthesiser sounds, imaginative studio production and the collective percussive prowess of American Rick Marotta, Englishman Morris Pert, a Linn drum computer and the Ghanian drums of the Ekome Dance Troupe. We get images of lingering paranoia and alienation " watched by the distant eyes . . . by the silent spies . . . I walk away from the light and sound, down stairways leading underground" — and of more direct persecution — "they put you in a box so you can't get heard... and you face the night alone... while the builders of the cages sleep with bullets, bars and stone". (Gabriel has pledged the royalties on the latter song, "Wallflower", to Amnesty International). He obviously feels generally put upon by modern pressures and in "San Jacinto" he reveres the landed spirituality of the American Indian. One can see him sloshing around his Midlands pigfarm in gumbies pretending he is being led by a medicine man "past Geronimo's disco Sit 'n Bull Steakhouse whitemen dream". Despite the gathering clouds Gabriel's attitude is seriously positive, as in the samba mood of "Kiss of Life" — "she blows hard, she blows deep in the mouth of death, burning with the kiss of life".

INXS . . . *danceable, but fairly one-dimensional*

Kate Bush has always been hard to ignore, from the time when as a mere schoolgirl she was given the professional nod by Dave Gilmour of Pink Floyd. *The Dreaming* (EMI) is her third album and the lady continues to impress with her masterful involvement at all levels. She wrote the material; played a variety of keyboards; demonstrated an expanding vocal ability, arranged and co-produced the album, and choreographed all her demanding dance routines for live work and videos. As if to emphasise the one-woman nature of the show, there is no information about the other players on the cover. Big drum sounds under-pin her richly textured rhythmic fragments, chants, melodies and occasional angular guitar. Bush has a whole music hall full of characters lodged in her throat, mouth and nasal passages, and she swoops rapidly to them — like an eagle to its prey — all over her range.

Without a script it's often a bit hard to follow the plots in their entirety, but Houdini's wife rates a mention for her supposed practice of orally transferring the all-important key to the famous escapologist during her good luck kiss. The Australian aborigines receive coverage in "The Dreaming", as well as backing by our first ambassador to England, Rolf Harris, on didgeridoo. Ms Bush is certainly taking more chances with each release and as the pieces become more complex, her visual prowess becomes a more and more important part of her presentation.

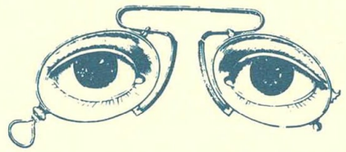
Another who will need great visuals as a listening aid is **Kim Carnes** — unfortunately for very different reasons. Not that *Voyeur* (EMI) is a bad-sounding effort — the calibre of musicians alone ensures that. Her distinctive voice (thank you Lord for sending me those normally catastrophic nodes) will nudge the listening market's memory about how much it enjoyed "Bette Davis Eyes". Yes folks, an accomplished act maintains an accomplished West Coast rock mood, without the disruption of delivering anything too arresting.

Those who missed out on the rise of **Bow Wow Wow,** Malcolm (Sex Pistols) McLaren's creation of three young hoods with an even younger singer (15-year-old Annabella Lwin) can now get a comprehensive view of *The Original Recordings* (EMI) — mainly 1980/81. McLaren is no dummy and Annabella no puerile non-talent. She breathes a youthful but lustful energy into their record sales suicide note "C30 C60 C90", and 15 other tracks including an extended, timbale get-down version of their reassurance to welfare state youth "W.O.R.K.N.O."

Kate Bush . . . *masterful involvement at all levels*

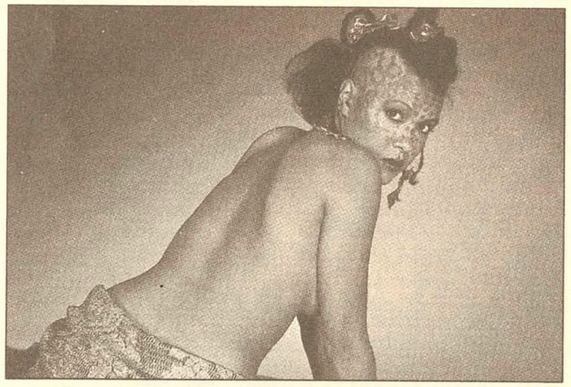
German wackers **Trio** — of the sullen, Schnaps-sunk eye sockets — have already captured the radio programmers' ears with "Da Da Da". Just in case dialectic subtleties escape you, they remind us of their West German origin by printing their address and phone number on the cover of *Trio* (Mercury), though thankfully no photos of themselves. Obviously they have few creditors, or the Berlin Zoo has been receiving an annoying amount of "wrong numbers". The demented use of their sparse lineup and megaphonic vocals ably conveys a Deutsch nightlife bar mood. Not too proud to repeat themselves, songs included are "Achtung Achtung", "Ja Ja Ja", "Ya Ya" and "Da Da Da". Despite an obvious artistic grasp of angular minimalism, blue suede socks are frequently showing and slabs of their native tongue are often interrupted by such anglified sentiments as "heartaches, wo-o-oh, heartaches" and "help me bay-bee, is it really the end-ah". Well actually, no, so they continue to play and "dare to be interesting".

That lanky, psychotic poseur **Iggy Pop** now reclines in his *Zombie Birdhouse* (Animal). His guttural, primal singing advises you to "run like a villain 'cos you can't adjust to a saccharine suburb in the mush" and philosophises: "O: What do you do with a life of work? A: Face it in the morning". Mr Pop's classic delivery with its drone-like lilt wafts across the beat of Blondie boys Clem Burke (drums) and Chris Stein (bass), while Rob du Prey's guitar scratches away for hours on one chord with occasional leanings on keyboards (remembering that the cover informs us "there are no synthesisers on this record"). Birdhouse is definitely a mood piece in the mould of his earlier single "I'm Bored". The lad menaces in a disinterested tone that may be reassuring to



the insecure.

If you eagerly awaited *Face Dances* from **The Who,** and then pretended it never happened, *It's Hard* (Polydor) will give you little reason to move down the back of the shop (if you would please ladeez an gennermen!) to the "W" bin — despite recent accolades. The basic fact is that without Keith Moon, The Who strut — albeit in an accomplished manner — where once they flailed gloriously. Like the dog that has been hit by a car and struggles to the gutter only to die, the band is about to breath its collective last. As usual it is the obsessively self-analytical Pete Townshend who eloquently puts a seal on the whole matter with "Our teens . . . that was life enough for me, one life's enough for me". Drab one, lads.



Bow Wow Wow . . . *no puerile non-talent*

A pedestrian approach to song treatment rears its ugly head on **Ward 13's** *Too Much Talk* (Mercury). Their bio asks: "But what extraordinary idiosyncracies lurk behind these humorous exteriors?" Frankly, this seven track mini-album from a revamped lineup does little to make me insist on an answer.

Elsewhere, local rockabilly trio **The Mighty Guys** don't attempt to try as hard; they simply pick their basic bop with this advice: *Be Cool, Be Smart (Rivet/Festival). A moderate non-event on record, they are probably fun with several jugs of firewater and an interested partner.*

Linda Ronstadt advises to *Get Closer*/(Asylum) for nudge-nudge success. The spotty cover and inner sleeve would make a luverly hat . . . oh yes — the music . . . Country-influenced rock (one duet apiece with James Taylor and J.D. Souther), six 60s relics (ho hum) and a couple of Jimmy Webb ballads (surprise, surprise).

From the land of *Porky's* comes the soundtrack double album *Fast Times At Ridgemont High* (WEA). It contains performances by most of American high school students' list of required listening, ie Jackson Browne, individual ex-Eagles, Billy Squier, some Fleetwood Maccers, the Go Gos . . . you get my drift?

Finally, some local history with another Johnny O'Keefe compilation. This double, titled *The Johnny O'Keefe Story* (Festival), is probably the most comprehensive, with the "early singles", the "ballads", some "rock and roll" and of course, the "hits". You can also purchase a similarly-titled and simultaneously released book for topic reinforcement. — *Jeremy Cook*

WORDS

WHAT DO GIRLS LIKE?

There was a slight but in a way profound pop song on the radio a while back by an American band called The Waitresses, in which a raunchy female vocalist intoned provocatively: "I know what boys like, I know what guys want, I know what boys like . . . boys like me!" With these few pithy phrases the young lady managed to summarise what most women consider to be the modern male's major source of motivation — indiscriminate lust.

But when the female of the 1980s comes to consider her own sexual preferences, she presents herself as a far more complex creature . . . at least, if you take any notice of **The Cosmo Report** (Corgi, $5.50) by Linda Wolfe. From it you could not help but conclude that when it comes to coupling, the fairer sex is all mixed up, despite the supposedly liberated mores it has picked up during the "sexual revolution".

The Cosmo Report is billed as the definitive study of the sex life of the American female, in view of the fact that *Cosmopolitan* magazine received responses from more than 100,000 women to its detailed questionnaire. As a broad sample group this certainly compares favorably with previous surveys. For example Shere Hite's *Hite Report* drew its shonky conclusions from about 3000 responses and Masters and Johnston's research for *Human Sexual Response* was conducted with only 382 females and 312 males.

The survey claims to present the facts rather than the fantasies, but it fails, like those before it, to deliver the goods. The book's statistical bones are fleshed out with quotes from respondents, but the combination fails to give a three-dimensional image of the American woman. Ms Wolfe trots out the same cliches about the woman's need for commitment, understanding and tenderness, despite her increased promiscuity and infidelity, and offers limp conclusions like the final sentences in the inevitable chapter on telling your lover how to give you an orgasm: "No one can say whether another person's life will eventually contain sexual knowledge, self-esteem and a concerned partner. But these days, if statistics are any guide, the outlook is reasonably bright." What overwhelming profundity.

The report's statistical nitty gritty reveals facts like these: • Fifty-four percent of the woman who were married had had one or more sexual encounters with partners other than their husbands since marrying. • The vast majority — 83 percent — kept their infidelities to themselves. • Thirty-six percent make love three to five times per week. • Sixty-three percent wish they were making love more frequently. • Seventy-one percent preferred to make love at night rather than in the morning. • Fifty-five percent have made love during their lunch hour. • Ninety-five percent masturbate several times a month. • Two percent of women regularly practise flagellation or other sadomasochistic behavior. • The majority of women have had numerous lovers. The median was nine lovers per woman.

With typical perversity, the American woman's response to the sexual revolution was one of resentment. More than half of the respondents were disillusioned, with the feeling that sexual freedom had benefitted men more than women. Perhaps *The Cosmo Report* offers women some insights into their own sexuality, but from the male point of view it left me cold . . . I still don't know what girls like. But I'm sure, after my last few futile forays at the meat market, that they don't like me! — *Colin Hinton*

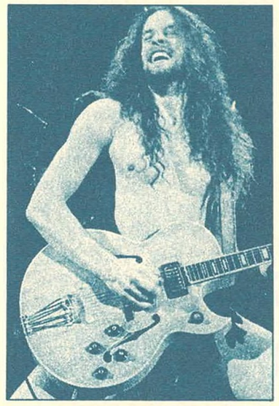
When it comes to name-dropping, American authoress turned English socialite Fleur Cowles is a world heavyweight contender. According to Miss Cowles, over the years people like Dwight Eisenhower, General Douglas Macarthur, Harry S. Truman and the late King Paul of Greece all at one time or another sought her advice before making important decisions.

Miss Cowles refers to her warm friendship with these notables in her latest book **All Too True** (Australian Publishing Co, $23.50), in which she relates some of the intimate secrets she shared with them. Even the serious side of comedian Jack Benny and the "warmly human" side of Joseph Stalin get a mention in the book, which she assures us consists of "true stories that might have been invented."

Unfortunately for the woman's readers, her style as a raconteur is as dead as most of the notables she has written about in 29 vignettes which she assures us "touched the lives of these people — sometimes traumatically, sometimes hilariously, sometimes hauntingly."

For someone like myself who had never previously read the works of this writer, which we are told in her coverleaf *curriculum vitae* include *The Flair Book* and *Treasures of the British Museum,* her shortcomings as a storyteller are a bit of a let-down. This is, I suppose, mainly because in the introduction to her book, Miss Cowles informs her readers that she has adopted the literary techniques of Guy De Maupassant and O. Henry.

If there is anything memorable about this book, apart from its lying in direct antithesis to the styles of Maupassant and Henry, it is probably the picture of Miss Cowles on the back cover with her finger up her nose. — *Colin Mackay*



Nugent . . . *entertaining*

Contrary to popular belief, the Second World War was about as organised as a chimpanzee's tea party. According to Tom Shachtman's **The Phoney War** (Harper and Row, $24.95) it was the result of a series of blunders, misinformation, misinterpretation and prejudice.

For example: Hitler was the target for a top-level military coup before the declaration of hostilities. But British diplomatic reaction pushed the little corporal too far too soon. He invaded Poland and the German generals, now at war, called off their plans for assassination.

Shachtman's brilliant account of that uneasy period before the Allies combined is one of the most readable and enlightening books about the war. *The Phoney War* is more a work of journalism than an interpretive history. It is a superb recreation of the follies, the stupidities and the arrogance of Europe's leaders, who blundered around the corridors of power until they stumbled into war.

Bestiality is not my scene, but I have to admire the skill and chutzpah of a writer who includes a love-making scene between a man and a dolphin in his first novel. Derek Bickerton's **King Of The Sea** (Granada, $5.95) is remarkable in other ways. The plot concerns a researcher who decides that his experiments with dolphins are being conducted incorrectly. He comes to believe that instead of teaching them our language, we should be learning theirs, and in order to do so he embarks on a fantastic adventure in the Pacific, eventually being adopted by a roving dolphin school. Bickerton's trendy flights of fancy are bound to appeal to those who have developed an affinity with the kings of the sea. — *Ian Swallow*

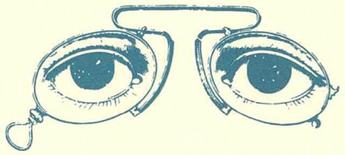
New Women in Rock . . . *a fart in a bottle*

Reading about rock and roll is a poor man's substitute for getting out there and chomping steel to the real thing. But the problems involved in getting rock and roll's feeling across in print (without a complimentary pair of JBL studio monitors with every book) has been solved, or skirted around, by Omnibus Press.

This company has been pouring forth a stream of rock paperbacks of varying quality. Some are meaty, while others as inconsequential as a Leif Garrett album. **New Women in Rock** (Omnibus) fits the latter category. It is a poor excuse for slinging together scads of black and white and color shots of just about every sheila who has wailed, plucked or fucked her way into the charts in the last 10 years.

And don't get the impression that this feather-weight offering is selective when it comes to picking its subjects. Genuine talents such as Joan Armatrading, Poly Styrene, Kate Bush and Tina Weymouth have been given the same scant editorial space as Wendy O'Williams, Cherry Vanilla, and Ivy Rorschach, any of whom could be musically outclassed by a barmaid farting in a bottle. The words between the pictures consist of thumb-sketches of the ladies in question, gleaned from gushing record company hand-outs. This one doesn't even look good on the coffee table.

But for a hootin' hollerin'



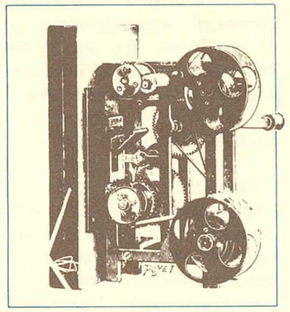
stormtroop into a real rock and roll legend, you can't go past **The Legendary Ted Nugent** (Omnibus, $6.95) by Robert Holland. Nugent is the non-drug taking, non-drinking human dynamo, who gave us street songs like "Wang Dang Sweet Poon Tang", "My Love Is Like a Tyre Iron Yank Me Crank Me", and "The Flying Lip Lock".

Of course, Nugent plays guitar and sings just like rockers the world over. But he also has an inexhaustible appetite for pussy and meat killed with his own hunting bows and rifles . . . so he makes for great copy. Just turn him loose on any subject and he'll give you an earful of the most bombastic, opinionated, self-indulgent, entertaining waffle you'll ever hear from a rock and roller.

Holland tracks Nugent from his earliest band, The Royal High Boys, when he was aged 11 ("At 11 I was a hammer nasty . . . Gonzalitis Estremis!") through to the famous Amboy Dukes, and on to Ted's brain-snapping solo career.

Listening to Nugent talk about his favorite subject — himself — is to wallow in the narcissism of one of the most extraordinary characters in the rock world: "I don't think about deep things. If you can't take a bite out of it, it doesn't exist. You know what my life is like? It is very well defined. I get up five minutes before we have to leave for the airport, I get on the plane, I get off, I go to sound check, I rehearse, I snag some backdoor youth and have some sex, I toss her out, I do interviews, I play in the tuning room, I have a huge shit, I get head, I rupture the masses with my guitar playing, then I snag some more pussy and I go to bed. And if I'm not doing that, I'm talking to the road crew, my truck drivers, my T shirt sellers, about what they should be doing. I am totally the product of my own desires. I am the nucleus. I have life dicked." — *Roger Crosthwaite*

FILMS



WHIZ-BANG

Steven Spielberg's **ET** is a lesson in film-making . . . for the Walt Disney Studios. Ironically, at a time when the once great organisation of family emotional manipulation has shown with **Tron** that it has lost the knack, Spielberg, a child of the Fifties when Disney *had it,* is showing the Disney mob how it's done — by using all the old Disney tricks. *ET* is *Lassie Come Home, Dumbo* and *Mary Poppins* (the latter two Disney productions) all wrapped up into one, as well as being a sequel to his own *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind.* Disney's *Tron* (well, not really Walt Disney anymore — the studio is now so far removed from the great visionary that there is about as much connection between personal imprint and lack-lustre output as that between the mass produced cake of some multi-national conglomerate and the Granny Smith who inspired it), is an excellent example of second-guessing an audience. Video games are the follow-on from the video game-style movies of Speilberg and George Lucas . . . so why not a $20 million biggie taking the video freaks inside a master computer swimming with all those video game electronic doo-dads?

Concentrating on what Walt made his name at — animation — director Steve Lisberger has fashioned a part live-action, predominantly animated tale not too far removed from *Star Wars,* pitting two male heroes and a heroine against a force as dark as Darth Vader and his legion of space squadron fighters. All set around the quest of the Hans Solo clone (played by the ever affable Jeff Bridges) in his attempt to break the security of a master computer to prove that the big winner in the video-game business is actually *his* invention and not that of the Darth Vader-like corporation head (David Warner at his sniggering best). Through a freak accident, Bridges is reduced to the size of a speck of dust and zapped into the innards of the computer where Master Control Program — akin to The Force — is out to

ET . . . *tugging at long-dulled heartstrings*

overthrow the program's creators. The alien world created by Lisberger's animators, both at the Disney Studio, Hollywood and Taiwan (!), is a grey soup of futuristic graphology and fully-dimensioned geometric forms (courtesy of computerised animation) that make the whizbang paraphernalia almost an overlay of the Lucas vision in his *Star Wars* trilogy.

The great pity with *Tron,* deemed the new "state of the art" in animation (God help us!), is that the characterisation is on par with the drabness of the computer landscape or universe. Confusion abounds in a tale that runs too long for its own good, with little in the way of human relationships to counterbalance the too-few really dazzling pieces of animated action Repetition sets in — and with it, boredom. Not so with *ET.* By now every man and his dog (or every boy and his ET) will have been inducted with the massive marketing invasion spurring Speilberg's latest excursion into mid-west suburbia to the head of the top grossing films of all time. It appears the man cannot help himself. By allowing free reign to his imagination — as Walt Disney once did when building his own magic kingdom around — Speilberg is staying in tune with the fantasy urge of a mass audience. Boy, do we need that escape in this ever-depressing world where, at times, reality comes across as something dreamed up by some Hollywood brains trust.

The Halloween pumpkin-like space craft from which the extraterrestial becomes separated at the film's opening could well be one of the many that buzzed the Mother Ship as an overture to its landing in the latter part of *Close encounters Of The Third Kind.* The humans who barge through the *Bambi*-inspired forest seeking the craft could just as easily have stepped out of a Tom & Jerry cartoon. The only sight of an adult in the first two-thirds of *ET* is given the cartoon aproach of below-the-shoulders, leaving the impression that this is exclusively a domain for the kids hogging the screen along with the prunish-featured ET. In doing so, playing on their reaction upon discovering their own alien playmate, Spielberg tugs at (one suspects) long-dulled heart strings, daring even the most flint-hearted of oldies to deny the spiritual cleansing the whole manipulative affair extolls. This is foot-stomping, hand-clapping, wipe-away-a-tear stuff and there is no shame in being pulled in by it all.

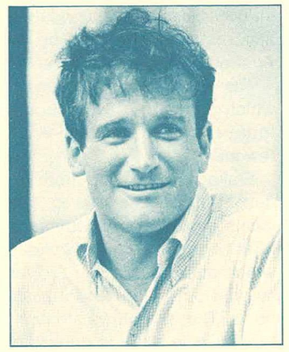
The key to Speilberg's success in getting away with a film Walt Disney would, I am sure, be proud to put his name to, is the way in which he pits adults (in the form of an unnamed government agency out to capture an ET of its own) against the kids. The kid in every one of us, while able to identify with our peers and the responsibility of advancing mankind through contact with an alien race, cries out to defend ET from their intrusion, to protect the kids . . . and the kid in ourselves.

Former British commercials director Ridley Scott is a visionary of another kind. The futuristic imagery of his *Alien* and the latest release, **Blade Runner,** startle — yet the core of his work is cold, negative. With the former, Scott casually (albeit impressively) wiped out the crew of The Nostromo like some latter-day Agatha Christie and her 10 little Indians. Human life had no worth when it came to the corporation, as such, getting its hands on its own ET of sorts. As to the latter, pulling his vision back to Los Angeles circa 2020 when the urban sprawl has congealed into a nightmare metropolis resembling Tokyo and Hong Kong put into one, and using Forties Bogart movies as his term of reference, Scott pits Deckard (Harrison Ford), a licensed bounty hunter, against "replicants" — synthetically-made humans, created to do the jobs humans no longer find savory — mining, space exploration . . .

Replicants are flesh-culture creations perfected to the point where they are virtually indistinguishable from humans, a ploy that gives the Deckard-Bogie hunter the hives when he finds himself falling for the film's Lauren Bacall figure, a new improved model of replicant culture. Suitably unshaven of face and close shaven of head, Ford keeps the collar turned up, the lip curled, his gun at the ready and his emotions in reserve as he chews his way through the milling mean streets of the near-future "Big Apple" gone mad that Ridley Scott would have us believe is waiting around the corner of the next few decades. Grim.

Alan Parker (*Bugsy Malone, Midnight Express*) splatters the screen with gruesomeness as well, translating Pink Floyd's double album of '79, **The Wall,** to widescreen visuals in what could best be described as an extended film clip of the type swamping *Countdown* and *Sounds* these days. Bob Geldof takes a breather from The Boomtown Rats to mime Parker/Floyd's put-upon rock star reliving the horrors of his breeding and upbringing in the sanctity of his LA penthouse hotel suite. Borrowing liberally from the master of the subtle, Ken Russell, Parker lays it on thick with slices of wartime life, the horrors lived by rock stars on tour, megastar jackbooting through London Streets, gathering the numbed product of a system Floyd and Parker are clearly convinced does not work around Geldof. *The Wall* is best expressed in the primeval scream caught in the Gerald Scarfe painting used in the film's advertising, with Scarfe also contributing to the lopsided narrative with a series of surrealistic animated visions that would have left Walt Disney scratching his head as to content and meaning.

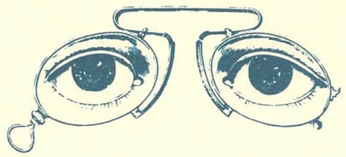
World According to Garp . . . *the heart of Irving's novel*



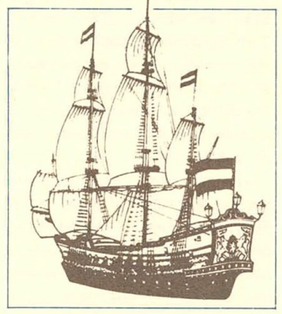
Blade Runner . . . *negative*

John Irving's *The World According To Garp* had the effect of an earth tremor in the publishing world, just as *Catch 22* did two decades back. The experience of transforming *Catch 22* to screen and the disappointment felt by devotees of Heller's masterpiece about the madness at the core of man's perceived management of war, could well act as a beacon to the Irving converts. Unencumbered by previous terms of reference, the explorer into Garp's cinematic world hopefully has an equally unencumbered view of lead actor Robin Williams. The delight of discovering Williams (not having seen his alien situation comedy on TV) *and* the heart of Irving's novel in the George Roy-Hill directed **The World According To Garp** is one of this holiday season's screen surprises. Blessed or cursed with an ideal centred around the success of the family structure, Garp (the name is derived from the sound a fish might make) is the bastard offspring from a one-night stand. His mother, determined to have a child, did so with a dying soldier in her nursing care in 1943.

Mother and son are as one in the son's growth to respected writer and the mother's as the Godhead of a feminist movement that relies on tongueless women for its most devoted lieutenants. Seeking normality and dignified peace within an environment of tumultous Fifties and Sixties middle America, Garp experiences only upheaval — not of a kind that pits nations against nations and affects the masses, but personal, individual, emotionally hurting upheaval that in the telling has the content to affect the masses. Blending the outrageous, the normal, the unthinkable, the thoughtful with humor both mild and at times dark, screenwriter Steve Tesich (*Breaking Away)* and director Roy-Hill have drawn the power from Irving's novel and topped and tailed it with all the innocence of the baby Garp who bounced into view at the front and end of this seductively disturbing work. — *Denis Whitburn*



TRAVEL



VANUATU

Paradise. The sky was blue, the sun was beaming and the water around our little native outrigger canoe was crystal clear. Even the water in our canoe was crystal clear.

Below we could see the vivid colors of the coral, the tiny flourescent fish darting about ...

Oh, dear. More water splashed into the canoe and it looked like we were going to have a closer look at the coral and the fish. Remember now, it can be quite poisonous if you scrape your feet on the coral or the volcanic rock. Adjust the thongs. Time to abandon canoe.

And then came a fear-drenched shriek from the rear of the canoe. From my good lady and steering partner at the rear of the canoe.

Don't worry. The water's fine. It's warm. It's not deep. No sharks. More shrieks. The lady was pointing into the canoe.

No problems, we'll just haul the canoe over to the beach there and everything'll be jake.

Then she spoke.

"Sea snake", she said.

A pretty little sea snake.

Remember school. The prettier they are, the deadlier.

My certainty about the delights of the blue lagoon began to fade.

They hadn't told us about sea snakes when they booked us for a few days on Vanuatu. Told us about beaches, yes. About good restaurants, yes. About sun and friendly people, yes. Sea snakes didn't get a guernsey. Oh yes, it was all true. The water around Vila is clear and warm. It's wonderfully unpolluted — local divers take time out regularly to pick up any stray cans or rubbish that spoil the underwater view. The locals are proud of their little piece of paradise.

But they should have told us about the sea snakes.

Back in the bar, after being rescued from our water-logged canoe by a cheerful native fisherwoman (who had no trouble at all keeping her canoe afloat — even seemed able to steer it in the right direction), we were told that the sea snakes had never been known to hurt anyone. And there was another improbable local legend stating that their fangs were conveniently placed so far back in the throat they weren't able to bite you, even if they wanted to. A likely tale.

In the middle of this lagoon, only a few minutes' drive from the township, lies Erakor Island, our home for a few days. It's a unique collection of bungalows, beaches and a fine restaurant. That was one of the things they told us about.

Like most of the business of Vanuatu, Erakor is half-owned by the locals. The other half is owned by Australian interests and the island accommodation and restaurant are run by an Australian couple.

There's a free ferry service which chugs its way back and forth across the lagoon every few minutes.

Erakor Island, apart from its delightful beaches (even the locals go there for swimming), offers a get-away-from-it holiday which doesn't take you too far away from the comforts of home. The bungalows are comfortable, the water is drinkable, the fridges work and you can sit outside the bedrooms at sunset, watching land crabs scuttle by while sipping on one of those pleasant French wines readily and cheaply available in this duty-free port which still maintains its French connections.

The duty-free shopping is not the best in the world but the selection of wines is first class. Even your actual Aussie plonk is available — although you can usually pick up a French vintage cheaper. The cooking is invariably superb — even the hamburgers taste like food. The French may have given up control of these islands but they've kept their influence in the kitchens. And there's a good range of restaurants so you don't have to break the bank every time you eat out. If the French cuisine begins to pall there's Chinese, Japanese, Italian, Thai and Vietnamese food to try — all tinged with a Melanesian flavor.

Don't be put off by the low prices charged for steaks here. The steaks are home-grown from very contented island beef and for the tastiest steak you will ever have sampled, you can expect to fork out only about $5.50 to $6. Go exotic and try the local specialities: flying fox (it has a "gamey" flavor), pigeon and delicious coconut crab. No sea snake on the menu though.

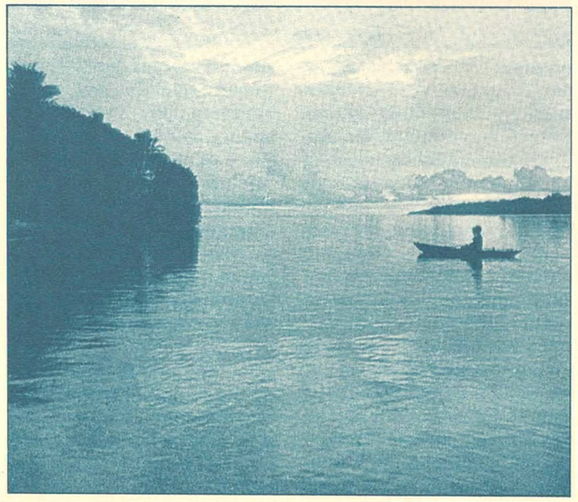
If you are of the energetic bent you can go sailing or windsurfing, snorkelling or water skiing. For scuba diving buffs the island offers a proper diving school and there are a number of interesting and convenient wrecks around Vanuatu which offer a pleasant day out (or under) for divers.

It's the people that make Vanuatu a paradise without peer. They like people. Even tourists. Even Australian tourists. They don't rip you off, they smile and laugh constantly. They take their time to get things done, but who wants to hurry in paradise? There's no tipping, no bargaining, no hassles and no timetables. Any more relaxed and the place would be in a coma.

For a week in Vanuatu you could reckon on spending from $550 to $600 for the return airfares from Sydney and the accommodation. There are a number of good hotels if you can't get into the get-away-from-it-life on Erakor Island, and Magic Carpet Tours in Jamison Street, Sydney can give you all the details. Probably tell you about sea snakes if you ask.

Though we only saw the one.

Vanuatu . . . *don't ask about sea snakes*



Alexis Barthelay
le styliste de la montre
PARIS

SYDNEY: Denis James, Farren-Price, Perri, Diamond Traders, Musson Crows Nest, Michals Double Bay, Carina Kings Cross, Davlyn Strathfield, Diamond Den Hurstville, Gemtec Duty Free, South Pacific Duty Free. MELBOURNE: Theodores, Panache, Imp. BRISBANE: Watches International, Xennox, Robert White, McKinneys. ADELAIDE: Michaels, Burgess, Voivodich. CANBERRA: Prestige. SURFERS PARADISE: Optima. PERTH: Rosendorff. HOBART: Precision. HONIARA: Norman Bros. NOUMEA: La Rose de Corail.

Sex in Japan

There are many bizarre alternatives to the dole. This one tops the lot …

How in hell does a person end up on a stage screwing his girlfriend four to six times every day in front of 300 Japanese men? It's a complex question with a simple answer — money: the money to buy a chance for a shot at the dreams which were once common aspirations for all young Australians. As the headlines repeatedly tell us, an increasing proportion of Australia's youth is

BY JACK SAYLE

TONY LUNN

SEX IN JAPAN

unemployed. The result of their enforced alienation is frustration, aimlessness and despair. Lack of employment also means that many are forced to live in the margins — taking chances, squeezing into dubious and ill-fitting openings. This is how a once idealistic, educated young couple ended up ruining a fine love in dingy, smoky, boozy Japanese live sex theatres.

At first, at university, poverty was easy enough for us to bear — it was normal. I met Anita in the first term of our first year of tertiary study. By the end of the year we had moved in together. The independence was great. We qualified for the full TEAS allowance — $46 a week. It didn't matter that we were paying more than $40 rent a week between us. Sometimes we could even afford a flagon of cheap wine to help us forget that occasionally, we also needed commodities like food, clothing and books as well as money for bills.

From university we went out to face the realities of the job market. Initially we were both naive enough to expect some form of employment, but the unanswered applications rapidly provided us with unwelcome wisdom. The Social Security Department soon became our best friend and with friends like that you don't need enemies.

We weren't spent yet, however. *Work experience,* we thought: that was what we needed. For almost 18 months we offered our services on a voluntary basis and balanced that with attempts to bring in a few extra dollars by joining the hard-nosed sharks haggling for potentially profitable bargains at various auctions. In addition, we produced crafts and other goods for sale besides trying the 101 other things unemployed people have to do in order to survive.

Once Anita and I had slowly built voluntary work histories, a very occasional interview would come our way. What an outrage! The job on offer would always be one well within the compass of a competent 15-year-old school leaver. But still, off we would go: well groomed, well dressed (with borrowed clothes), enthusiastic and well researched into the position and the company or institution. Home Anita or I would come, feeling that we had acquitted ourselves effectively (interviews become like a trial, after a while). But we always ended up receiving the phone call that went: "Ah, John, well I'm afraid I haven't got the news you'd like to hear, but *blah,* blah, blah."

After hundreds of knock-backs, the unthinkable became thinkable, the seemingly impossible appeared possible. We had heard travellers' tales of money to be made on the Japanese live sex circuit for some time. At first we dismissed the idea. It was fit only for the shameless, the immoral and the desperate. But eventually we joined their ranks and, as we discovered, it is the desperate who often have to act in shameless and immoral ways.

"Well, let's try it," we decided late one cold and lonely night. From the outset, we realised that we would need the cash for airfares and at least a few weeks' living expenses. That was a problem. How do you save on the dole? We tried the old one meal of rice and vegetables per day trick, but ended up hungry rather than wealthy. Still we managed to save something before hitting parents, relatives and friends for loans. Next we sold what furniture we had accumulated over the year.

After months of self-denial we had saved enough money for the airfares. Minus contacts or any real knowledge of Japan, we found our way across sea and land to the cheapest place in Narita Airport's accommodation guide, the Asia Centre in Tokyo.

Cheapest doesn't necessarily mean cheap. On a balmy mid-autumn afternoon, we checked in before employing the type of resourcefulness born of necessity. Anita and I headed straight out the back to the garbage cans, searching for old plates and cutlery. Our scavenging was successful, eliminating the need to eat at restaurants, with all that lettuce, tomato, bean curd and dried fish just waiting at the market for a plate.

> We found ourselves in the tattiest Tokyo streets. They had a seedy side-show alley atmosphere. It was all sex and sleaze

The next day brought two major problems — finding more reasonably-priced accommodation and an income to tide us over until we could kick off our career copulating for Japanese audiences. Private accommodation seemed to be the most promising solution to the first problem, but the ambivalent attitude towards *gaijins* (foreigners) and the unique Japanese rental system soon convinced us otherwise. For instance, although Japanese culture dictates politeness, there's still a lingering and deep distrust of foreigners. Similarly, and somewhat paradoxically, the Japanese also seem to feel culturally superior on the one hand and yet exhibit a marked deference to Westerners on the other. At times, this can make it difficult to get straight-forward answers to straight-forward questions.

We persisted, only to come face to face with the outrageous rental system. Short-term rental is difficult in Japan because of the low mobility of the Japanese people and the concomittant expectation that rental is for a lifetime, barring unexpected events. Additionally, work references are near enough to essential, as is three months' rent in advance, one month's bond and one month's non-returnable goodwill. For even very modest accommodation, that can add up to around 250,000 yen ($1000) up front.

Blown out and temporarily stuck with the Asia Centre, but motivated by rapidly dwindling finances, we changed tack and put all of our efforts into finding work.

Even though our replies to newspaper advertisements for English teachers were unsuccessful, one prospective employer happened to mention a cheap boarding house, the Foreign Lodge, in the Mejiro district of Tokyo. Here, he said, *gaijins* were often recruited for teaching jobs.

We had moved in by the following evening. Everything, of course, is relative and we were relatively pleased to be paying only 20,000 yen a week rent. Foreign Lodge turned out to be a two-storied wooden building with sliding doors and windows, traditional Japanese tatami floor coverings and diminutive 2m x 3m rooms, each furnished with two mattresses, blankets and one table. All cooking, toilet and laundry facilities were shared.

Our new home was a useful contact centre and in no time at all I had gained employment teaching English for a company at Nishi Funabashi on the western outskirts of Tokyo. It was only for eight hours per week, but my wage almost covered the weekly rent and it somehow seemed worth it, even though the two-hour daily train ride was a drag. Nishi Funabashi was just factories and onion fields and the administrative staff in my classes were all wound-up little robots.

With such a handy halter on our galloping travellers' cheques, we were in a position to start seeking out the big money. The problem was, where to start?

We wasted many dollars in no time, driving round and round Tokyo in taxis night after night. "Sex show, sex show," we implored — only to be met by blank, uncomprehending faces. Our Japanese was obviously primitive and their primitive English was positively simian.

So, like cops on the beat, we decided to take to the streets. We walked and we talked and we looked. First we went to the Ginza. It was no good — expensive and trendy, definitely not the place for our tatty schemes. Next we tramped through the Shinjuku district. It was better: there were even a few sex shops and tame topless shows, but it was still a little up-market.

The next stop was Asakusa, and I started to see my wages going in shoe leather. However, with every added increment of desperation, we merely downed a little more whisky. And with the whisky came courage, and with courage, education: education in the form of the words "chicky chick" — the Japanese term for screwing.

That bit of information sparkled like crystal. "Chicky chick, chicky chick?" We asked person after person, shocked faced after shocked face — "chicky chick, chicky chick?" More whisky, more "chicky chick". At last we got results — pointing fingers. We followed them. Bingo! We found ourselves in the tattiest streets around Asakusa. They had a decaying, seedy, side-show alley atmosphere, with shows, strippers, prostitution and drugs. It was all sex and sleaze!

It was a case of pick a show and in we go. Rokku Asakusa, entrance fee 1500 yen, closing time 10 pm. Damn, nearly that already and only a few Japanese and *gaijin* strippers on stage. Praying that someone here could offer some informed advice, we made our one big bold move and beelined backstage as soon as the curtains fell.

We were in luck. The first person we made contact with was a Columbian woman who spoke English. The feedback was positive and our hopes were high. "Come back tomorrow. It's too late for business tonight," she told us.

Anita and I returned the following day to be ushered upstairs by the ticket collector on the main door. The collector, a woman of around 40, knocked, entered a top floor room, mumbled something in Japanese and hastily departed, leaving us facing five very surprised-looking gentlemen. Our immediate problem was the language barrier. They acted indifferently. We looked around. Time passed. We looked around some more. The room was small, dingy and smoky. There was a closed circuit television set, a pin-up board cluttered with numbers and figures, a safe, a desk and two ragged old lounge chairs. Every ashtray was full. The men played cards.

We felt small. More time passed. Then the phone started ringing. A jovial guy wearing a black finyl jacket answered, grunting into the mouthpiece. Shortly after the phone call, the Columbian lady from the night before walked in and formally introduced us to Hamma, an oriental Tony Curtis look-alike who was to be our manager. He lit a cigarette and got down to business. Through the Columbian, we explained the nature of the act we had in mind and, in turn, were frankly asked if we knew what we were getting ourselves into. Of course, we both nodded yes. "Okay, meet Hamma here at 10am tomorrow," said the woman before showing us the door.

By 11.30am the next day, Hamma still hadn't arrived. Punctuality definitely wasn't a big thing with these chaps, but anxiety was for us at the time. We waited, huddled in a corner like school kids expecting to be caned. Eventually he arrived dour-faced, unshaven and not looking at all like Tony Curtis.

He took us out the front and we climbed into a very conspicuous dark blue Ford Mustang. Anita and I sat in the back with Hamma in the front passenger seat. The driver, a thick-set, stumpy guy, was full of deep, belly laughs. It was a pity we didn't know the joke. Perhaps it was on us.

Tokyo is a big place, as big as our fears, and they increased as the drive turned into an extended tour of the city. After an hour and a half we were really worried. What had we got ourselves into? A concrete shoes job for me, and the white slave trade for Anita? Then the car stopped. Our destination was a theatre. In we went, to be met by an English girl of around 25 who looked, well, very professional. We were in the Matsudo district west of Tokyo. Anita and I had been brought here to watch some shows and get a general feel for the business. That proved useful, as the closest either of us had come to this sort of thing was locked up in our imaginations.

It became obvious that no degree of professional expertise was required. Basically each act we saw that day centred around a woman, either *gaijin* or Japanese, taking the stage, dancing and then stripping. The strip was simply a cue for a member of the all-male audience to leap up and join the dancer, who would then undress the man, pump him, slide a condom on and drag him to the floor for a ride between her legs. With that finished, a second male would then join the woman; she'd pull him off, accept a third man, give him the same treatment as the first, then leave the stage. The remainder of the audience would stay seated and masturbate under towels covering their laps.

When the lesson was over we went back to the English lady to reaffirm the point that we were prepared to screw in front of the audience, not be screwed by them. That, she assured us, was understood from the start. Hamma was then called over and terms were negotiated. We would start in one week, doing four 20-minute shows per day (six on Saturdays), 10 days on and 10 days off or 20 on and 20 off, etc. Most importantly, we would each earn 30,000 yen ($120) per day.

In the week before our debut, Anita selected our stage gear — black fish-net stockings, suspenders and frilly black panties, bra and gown for her; black, silver-sequined tights for me. I chose the accompanying music: *Riders On The Storm* by the Doors, Billy Joel's *It's Just A Fantasy, I Can't Tell You Why* by the Eagles and *Funky Town* by Lips Inc. We spent a few days attempting to choreograph an act, and our week was up. The fateful day had arrived. With stomachs churning like cement mixers, we stepped out on to the

"See, Dad, aren't you glad I never listened to you?"

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street, made our way to the subway and caught a train to Matsudo, leaving ample time to settle in before our initial show.

Luckily, we shared our dressing room with a friendly, helpful, but terribly messed-up American girl who tried to settle us down and advised us to wear plenty of make-up in order to avoid looking like washed-out ghosts under the bright lights. We quizzed her as to the advisability of popping some valium we had bought along just in case. She replied in the affirmative, so we each downed 15mgs, topped that with whisky and waited it out, alone with our thoughts and make-up. Heaps of make-up. Anita looked like a clown to me. I told her so, only to be met with the reply that I looked like "a frenzied and pathetic faggot". The strain was showing already.

Our little exchange didn't help matters. I moved backstage to peep out from under the curtains. Row upon row of glaring male Japanese eyes stared in my direction. I walked back to the dressing room, past the stagehands, wondering how many times they had watched nervous new performers going through what we were going through — controlled terror.

After what seemed like hours, the guy playing the records came to our room and told us: "Last record." This was it. As soon as the record was finished, we were on. The record stopped. Then the sound of "Funky Town" sliced the air. They were playing our song.

Anita moved on to the stage and began dancing. All I could manage to think of was how glad I was not to be out there too. But, of course, I soon would be. I watched Anita. She gave the big "come on" hip swivel, which was the cue for me to join her. I stormed out, more in terror than eagerness, and started groping at Anita's gear. Our choreographed moves fell apart. We fumbled over one another like two awkward, uptight virgins, yet somehow managed to strip naked and hop on to the rotating bed. I rubbed Anita, she pulled furiously on my flaccid cock. Nothing was happening. "Pretend," we thought, so I placed myself on top of Anita and we simulated intercourse.

Everything was fine — until disaster struck. The record controller managed to play the wrong disc at the wrong time: managed, that is, to put the record scheduled to be played last on too early. Anita, high on adrenalin and hazy from the pills and booze, heard it and, thinking the act was over, left the stage — leaving me sprawled out on the bed squirming under the lights. Regaining my composure, I too grabbed my discarded clothing and left the stage sheepishly to a smattering of applause but a more general feeling of confusion. The audience, it appeared, were not even sure the act was over.

I was sure that our performing days were over. During the act, I had a persistent expectation that a voice, booming over the microphone, would say something like, "You two down there, it's over. Get off and don't come back."

Of course, the voice never boomed. Backstage, I poured out my doubts on to Anita — cool, reassuring Anita. "It can't get worse, only better," she said, adding that I'd have to get some lead into my pencil to make it physically, and therefore mentally, easier for both of us. Our American dressing-room mate interrupted us. She had viewed the whole performance and offered some advice, the essence of which was that we should, apart from relaxing more, strive for a sensuous but simple boy-girl theme. With another show coming up in 90 minutes, the advice was valuable.

By the end of the day, after four shows, I had managed to get an erection and enter

> My greatest problem was getting a hard-on, which meant that I had to concentrate on the plumbing rather than on Anita

Anita once. Things were looking up, but Anita was still coping far better than I.

Next day, apart from another bout of flaccidity induced by stage-fright, things went by with only one minor hitch during our first show for the day. Primarily through a misunderstanding, an over-eager audience member jumped on stage when Anita appeared for the preliminary dance routine, thinking she was a straight out fuck-act. Two stage hands soon ironed out that problem.

Gradually, and contrary to my expectations, the audience wasn't too distracting. My greatest problem was getting a hard-on, which meant I was too busy concentrating on the plumbing to notice much else. For Anita, it was an entirely different matter. For one, she never had the tiresome responsibility of getting and maintaining an erection. Secondly, she always spent more time on stage and, therefore, had to relate to the audiences more. The leering, lustful eyes; the contorted faces, as different audience members blew their wads; and the stumbling drunks — these were all regular features of her daily experience.

At times she was amused by their childishness, and at other times she would leave the stage filled with disgust, revulsion and hatred for the audience — a hatred which sometimes extended to all males, myself included.

In time, as with most jobs, we settled in and actually began to get a reasonable sort of act together. Fundamentally, Anita would appear and dance to *Funky Town* for the duration of that song, after which I would appear and, with *It's Just A Fantasy* playing, join her to strip and caress one another. By this stage, and thanks to Anita's determined fingers, I would be hard and ready to screw. The bump and grind began when the next song, *Riders On The Storm,* hit the turntable.

Although it varied sometimes, we generally took care of this section of the act by starting with a stand-up screw, followed by a sixty-niner and then over to the missionary position, up again for some doggie action and finishing with Anita on top until climax. Anita on top was particularly popular with the audience, probably owing to the more submissive role usually adopted by Japanese wives. That was confirmed many times by Japanese men during our conversations with them over the ensuing months.

Once that part — an act in which we did strive for smooth, flowing sensuous movement — was completed, both of us would leave the stage. Anita would then return and do an "open", which involved spreading her legs at the edge of the stage for the audience to crowd in and inspect. Some time later, Anita incorporated a dildo, affectionately known as "the black beauty", into that final part of the act. Working the big, black, rubber cock into her vagina turned out to be a very popular finale, especially when performed to the sounds of *In The Long Run.*

Anita found the dildo personally rewarding as well. We already were losing any passion we'd once had for one another, with thoughts of a screw after work rarely occurring. In my case, I was ejaculating at least four times every working day. The idea of getting it off again at day's end was ridiculous.

Before the advent of the "black beauty", however, Anita was finding no outlet for her frustrations. Our actual live routine was too rushed to allow her any release. One minute she'd be dancing, the next she'd be sprawled out on a bed chock-a-block with cock. After a few strokes and before Anita could get comfortably relaxed, we'd then be up into a new position for a few more. It went on like that for the duration of the act. But the dildo finale allowed her the to work at her own pace, and to climax sometimes.

To cut unnecessary travelling time, we moved into the Matsudo theatre on our second day there and, by the end of the 10-day stint, we felt like veterans. It was with some confidence, then, that we flew all expenses paid to our next theatre in Hakata city on the island of Kyushu. We were met at the airport by one of the stagehands, driven to the theatre by van and told not to leave the premises. Apparently the immigration authorities were on the prowl, the result being that we had to remain cooped up in the windowless, below-ground building for the duration of our stay.

Here, all meals and drink had to be ordered by phone. We had nothing to read, nothing to do, no desire to screw the day away. In a fit of desperation we asked for a TV, but the Japanese programs were junk, especially considering we couldn't understand the dialogue. There was nothing to do but consider our predicament. We wondered where our lives were going. As a result of our own actions it seemed we had lost a large measure of control over our destiny.

The days passed. I became withdrawn. Anita tried to make conversation frequently but I was not inclined to talk. What would we talk about? Yesterday's activities were the same as those of the day before. The future was shaping up to be a blank sheet. There was no solace in the past or future, and nothing but public sex was happening in the present. In response to our situation and my introversion, Anita gradually became more tense and even aggressive. My silences were met with charges of: "You're a boring bastard." I guess I was. Things reached a head. We looked for something to do.

Consequently, we tended to watch other acts when not engaged ourselves. Here the dancers were garbed in more elaborate finery although the basic act was similar to that at the Matsudo. The girl would appear, dance, and shed some clothing before returning backstage for a costume change. Meanwhile, someone from the audience would take the stage and wait for the performer to reappear. This she would do carrying a small basket containing condoms and moisturised paper towels. Once undressed, the dancer would wipe the guy's legs, arms, stomach and prick with a towel, help him to an erection and then roll on a condom. Quite frequently this last action resulted in an unfortunate early climax for the gentleman. Needless to say, his place on stage was soon taken by another.

If things went a bit further than merely rolling on the condom, the two would screw in the missionary position unless a particularly big guy was involved, in which case the dancer would take the superior position.

Occasionally, someone might still be banging away at the end of the show's allotted 20 minutes. Without exception, the dancer in question would disentangle herself, leaving a very confused man standing under the bright spotlight struggling to get a stiff penis into his trousers.

Generally the girls were under instruction to screw two guys and masturbate at least one during each 20-minute show. Of course, it didn't always work out that way. On our third day at Hakata, one inebriated man took the stage, had his fun and, in the process, sobered up considerably. Lust was soon replaced with terror. The poor bastard was too embarrassed to put his clothes back on up there under the spotlight. Instead of moving into the shadows to dress, he simply bolted like a startled rabbit backstage. A real hullabaloo ensued as the stagehands searched for him. He was eventually found huddled under a pile of old curtains trying to bury his guilt along with his body.

Our own act seemed to develop at this theatre and, apart from the time I fell flat on my back as I made my entrance, things went smoothly. Anita was now managing to get the audience clapping along to the beat during her open dildo finale. As at Matsudo, it was very popular. In fact,

> The bizarre was apparently normal in this business. It could also be fun

members of the audience sometimes expressed their appreciation by offering gifts such as money, Kirin or Asahi beer, cigarettes and chocolates.

Despite the gifts and the enthusiastic patrons, a sense of danger was never far away in our temporary home and workplace. And where a sense of danger lurks, real menace is often not far away — like at the front entrance.

It was our eighth day in Hakata and we had just completed our second of four scheduled gropes when Anita, "black beauty" in hand, strode towards the edge of the stage for the finale. Suddenly the music stopped as the lights went out. Knowing the signal, we both raced to our dressing room, locked the door, turned off lights and air-conditioning, and waited. Three hours passed. When the intruders from the Immigration department had left, we were spirited away in a van for an all-expenses-paid night in a four-star hotel before being flown back to Tokyo next morning.

That was it. We needed a rest so we returned to Foreign Lodge for a break. We spent 10 days in Tokyo, wandering around taking photos, seeing the sights, wasting money on Space Invader machines, buying books and hanging about Foreign Lodge talking, drinking cheap Suntori whisky and smoking the dope brought in from the Philippines by other travellers.

Once, Anita and I might have taken full advantage of the grass by dreamily screwing time away. Interestingly enough, however, we never attempted sex together during these 10 days. The machinery was worn and tired. My cock, quite simply, was starting to feel like a dog's bone.

What a situation. I wasn't interested in sex in any form. Anita was, towards the end of the break — but not with me. "It'd be like an office girl taking home her typewriter for a bit of weekend fun typing," she explained. Our relationship had never been "open". We had always been faithful, more or less. But it was on the skids now. I suggested that she screw some of the guys around the lodge if she was horny. She did, including one innocent soul who told her, wide-eyed, about the money to be made doing live sex shows in Japan.

The 10 days drew to a close. Things were bad. Still, with over one million yen (or $4000) in our pockets already and a long dole queue the only thing waiting for us back in Australia, it could have been worse. Press on, we thought — drag the bone off to the next theatre.

That turned out to be Himeji, a bullet-train ride east of Tokyo on the Shinkansen. Here we saw our first really professional act, a slick dance routine by two Japanese women calling themselves the "Golden Gals" because of the gold paint covering their bodies. Wearing chastity belts and swords, the two would put the latter to good effect, then discard the belts in order to thoroughly debauch each other on a quilt near the edge of the stage.

The act was quite a turn-on for the audience, as the "fuck-acts" to follow frequently discovered. On one occasion a demure French girl took the stage immediately after the "Golden Gals". A man, gigantic by Japanese standards, soon joined her and, after the usual preliminaries, proceeded to literally push her from one side of the stage to the other like a bulldozer in top gear. It was by far the most brutal-looking coupling we had seen but Anita inquired into it once the girl had left the stage, only to be told that the bulldozer was "okay", that he had a "gentle touch".

A gentle touch! The bizarre was apparently normal in this business. It could also be fun. After a few days at a new theatre, the performers often became quite close — close enough for Anita to goad one of the "fuck acts", a Japanese girl aged about 19, into taking me on to the stage with her. I didn't mind at all, the chief attraction being the mystique that tends to surround women of other cultures. Conversely, there was some interest on the part of the Japanese girl, probably for the

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same reason. I was the only *gaijin* male on the circuit at that stage, and any curiosity she may have had was about to be satisfied.

Our intentions soon became common knowledge and when we walked out on to the stage together, all the other employees were backstage watching. Conscious of this, the girl and I put a little extra into the preliminary erotic dance. Quite frankly, the feel of her body excited me considerably. We undressed. We caressed. I moved to enter her but the girl, accustomed to the more modest dimensions of Japanese men, protested with cries of "Jumbo, jumbo.". Simultaneously, the audience on both sides of the stage broke up laughing. Once the ruckus had died down to the odd chuckle, we resumed. Again I tried to enter her. Again she refused. The girl wasn't joking. Nevertheless, she did masturbate me to climax and, for the first time that I could remember, it didn't seem such a bad way to earn a living.

Sometimes the 10-day stints went quickly; at other times they dragged. At Himeji, time flew and before we knew it, Anita and I were back in Tokyo preparing to move on again. But first we had to stock up on lubricants, which was always good for a laugh. Although we had tried vaseline, baby oil and Japanese herbal grease, KY jelly seemed to best suit our purposes. But there was a problem. Only one pharmacy in Tokyo that we knew of stocked it, and then only in jars. Consequently, on each visit it was necessary to purchase prodigious quantities of the stuff. Somehow, the same woman served us every time and we often wondered what the hell she thought we were doing with it.

Over the next month or so, we often wondered what we were doing with it too, as we moved, in a jelly whirl, from place to place, theatre to theatre. Names and faces went by in a blur. First Wakayama, a town famed for its hot spring baths, followed by Tachikawa, also on Honshu, and then over to Sapporo on Hokkaido, the renowned wilderness isle. We completed 130 public screws in 30 days and we were fucked.

There was only one thing to do — get out of Japan, take a break, a six-week holiday lazing on the beaches of beautiful Borocay Island in the Philippines. Like smack to an addict, the sun fed our feeble souls so that by the end of our stay we were both feeling tanned, relaxed and ready for the grind.

We weren't ready for the rude shock that greeted us back in Tokyo: snow and a bitter, cold wind. We were instantly depressed, and we were back at work. After one phone call we were off again, this time to Amagasaki City, a northern suburb of Osaka. This theatre seemed dingier and dirtier than the others. By the end of the night the icy, concrete floors were littered with empty booze bottles. Rats and cockroaches scurried in the filthy corners and the bedding was alive with lice.

Despite the atmosphere, we did see one mildly interesting act here. It revolved around two Japanese women, one a pregnant cigar smoker, the other a dumpy, sweet-faced sausage strangler. Atop a water bed, both ladies would cover themselves with soap suds before inviting an audience member to participate. Once disrobed, he too would be covered in soapsuds and the obligatory condom, following which the three usually screwed and sucked, awash in a sea of suds.

Apart from this, it was all just more of the same. Faces, arms, boxes, boobs, pricks, feet, legs, arses — the weeks passed in a big meat haze. By now Japan was plunged into the depths of winter and we were feeling like desiccated old pros drained dry at the fuck factory. We were also beginning to understand the business a little better.

Japanese society works in a way that sometimes resembles, in a crude, grotesque fashion, a manifestation of the old Kropotkinian notion of public opinion being utilised to exert moral pressure on the socially irresponsible. As such, convicted criminals, petty or otherwise, are ostracised and find it almost impossible to gain work. The sex trade is thus one of the few avenues left open to them. Apart from the criminals, who make up the majority of the Japanese people involved, social adventurers and renegades and, less frequently, women forced into it by their husbands, account for the remainder of participants.

Of the foreigners, most were in it for the money and probably well over half of those employed were either South American or Filipino. In contrast to the Australians, Americans and Europeans, people from the Third World were very poorly paid and were generally expected to "take" more customers each show. There were exceptions. One notable case was an Argentinian lady who frequently derided the "fuck acts", explaining that she only had to dance, not screw, for her money. Nature had provided her with a clitoris that protruded about five centimetres and merely flashing the oddity at the audience during her dance routine allowed her to earn more per day than the others could screwing 12 men in the same period. She was on easy street because of a strip of flesh!

For us, the whole live sex show caper seemed sordid and exploitative and we started to dream about leaving Japan. But we persisted until we had done the circuit of every "live" theatre run by the organisation which employed us. That dubious accomplishment should have been our signal to get out. But through greed or stupidity, Anita and I decided to do a final

"I've thought about getting into TM and Awareness and things like that. But most of all I've thought about getting into you."

10 days in order to be able to treat ourselves to a short holiday on the way home without digging into our savings.

As if scripted by a heavy-handed ironist, the location for our final fling was the Toyo Matsudo, our very first theatre. Except for a new chain on the door, nothing much had changed at the Toyo. It was still the testing place for new acts, but we were veterans.

Two days after our first show, eight Immigration officers waltzed in, dragged a Columbian off stage and rounded up the rest of the *gaijins* relaxing backstage, including Anita and me.

There was no polite explanatory chat with these guys. We were forced on to our feet and out into a waiting mini-bus. None of the "prisoners" seemed to know what to expect next, but they didn't appear to be overly concerned. Anita and I were accustomed to expecting the worst, which in this case could have been a jail sentence or heavy fine. At that stage, we saw possibilities of some kind of obscenity charge on top of the work permit hassles. It didn't even register that only one person, and certainly not either of us, had been caught in the act.

From the theatre, we were driven to a holding centre at the Shinagawa Immigration office and ushered upstairs past the tourists attending to routine visa concerns. They, presumably, got a stamp in their passports. We were locked in cells. From the cells, we were taken in groups of four to four separate enclosures, to be interviewed by pumped up clerks trying to act like G-men. I tried to deny that I had even been working, but that was never on.

There was nothing left to do but answer the inevitable questions. Name? Age? Last address in Australia? Background? Previous work experience? Income at the theatres? Boss at the theatre? How long have you been working the circuit? In response to the latter question, as I expected and later confirmed, everyone detained just happened to be working at their very first theatre. For one unfortunate girl, it was true. She had arrived that morning and had done just one show.

With the interrogation over, we were fingerprinted, photographed and then showered before being shoved back into the cells. I was the only male arrested at our theatre, and I ended up sharing a cell with three uncommunicative Korean guys detained for activities in another field. The eight females dragged from the Toyo, Anita included, were locked away with 14 others caught at different theatres.

The first thing I noticed about the cells, apart from their drabness, was the graffiti. It ranged from the helpfully reassuring: "Keep cool, it's happened to a lot of others" through the trying-to-be-profound "Soldier of fortune, my wheel of fortune had a flat tyre" and "Humans are crazy buggers — when it's hot they like it cold, when it's cold they like it hot" variety right down to the personal: "How do you think with a twisted lump of meat swirling around in your skull" strain.

A toilet, washbasin and three double bunks, as opposed to mattresses on the floor in the female cells, filled our space. Eventually a meal arrived — rice, one piece of fish, a small portion of pickled vegetable and tea. The menu didn't change during our four-day stay at the Shinagawa detention centre.

Apparently, owing to some weird and wonderful bureaucratic decree, we were supposed to undergo three interrogations during the four days. The questions were always the same. Everyone was just going through the motions. In between these chats, I agitated for better conditions by writing letters. Initially, I dashed off a minimum of two per day protesting the inhumanity of the conditions. Nothing happened. I tried a different tack and wrote about my depressed state and increasingly suicidal impulses. Actually, I was feeling okay but the ploy seemed to have some effect. After these letters, I was checked quite frequently, which gave me the opportunity to hammer home the "we're human too" line and thereby challenge their collective idea that people mixed up in the sex trade are shit: reprehensible, steaming shit.

> The women had an uproarious time. Lunging at the genitals of food-bearing clerks seemed to brighten their days considerably

But apart from the checks, there were no tangible results. It was time for another bluff. On this occasion it was the "let me speak to someone from the Australian Embassy" ploy. Bureaucrats are bureaucrats the world over, and the badgering probably had no effect although the next day we were bundled off to a more humane detention centre referred to as the "Yokohama Hilton" by the other inmates. After being led, handcuffed, through the downstairs visa processors and collectors, we were all packed into another mini-bus for our drive to the Yokohama Hilton. This gave me an opportunity to see Anita once more and catch up with news from the ladies' quarters. Owing to the sheer numbers detained, the women apparently had an uproarious time. Lunging at the genitals of the food-bearing clerks seemed to brighten their days considerably. The clerks, inhibited as they were, didn't complain.

Compared to the Shinagawa centre, the Yokohama really was a Hilton. Dormitory-style accommodation, exercise yards, television, table tennis, a choice of foods and the opportunity to order goods from outside certainly made life more bearable. We were still prisoners and the lack of real freedoms tended to counterbalance any sense of relief — especially as the days of confinement dragged on.

After 10 days there was still no end in sight.

As in all institutions of this kind, the sexes were strictly segregated, leaving me with seven Koreans, two Taiwanese, a Thai, an almost catatonic Englishman and one American to spend time with. The Asians didn't speak English and the Englishman didn't speak. That left the American.

Luckily he was an interesting and communicative character, a hardcore traveller who, having renounced life in the West, made a living doing whatever he could for a buck in order to spend the remainder of his time roaming the world. He made the last few days of confinement worthwhile.

Around lunchtime on the 12th day at the Yokohama, our captors informed Anita and I that our tickets out of Japan, which were to Thailand, were to be converted and that we would be deported to Hong Kong in two days time. Anita was as pleased as I. We had only been "done" for working without a permit. It was a routine charge. There were no hassles, no more detention.

On the appointed day, the 14th at the Yokohama, at 4am, we were driven by mini-bus to the airport. The end was in sight — Hong Kong, then home. The bus pulled into Narita airport. From there things moved quickly. First a stamp in the passports, a stamp barring us from entry into Japan for two years for being bad boys and girls.

There was a customs check and then we were on to the plane. From Tokyo we were flown to Hong Kong, where we ditched our passports and obtained new ones from the Australian embassy in order to rid ourselves of the offending stamps.

By this stage we both knew our relationship was finished . . . in fact we had known for some time, but our sojourn in Hong Kong confirmed that we had drifted apart. It would never be the same — emotionally or sexually — again. We returned to Australia and went our separate ways, for the first time in five years.

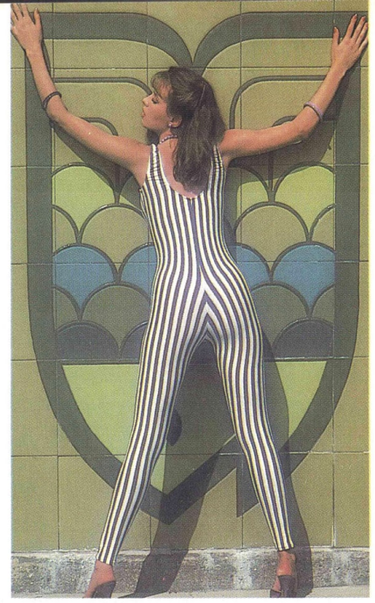
Now, we sometimes meet as friends and talk over old times, like veterans reminiscing about past battles . . . and I guess that's what we are: scarred survivors of a strange conflict — the young Australian's battle to live in the dismal dawn of this country's new era.

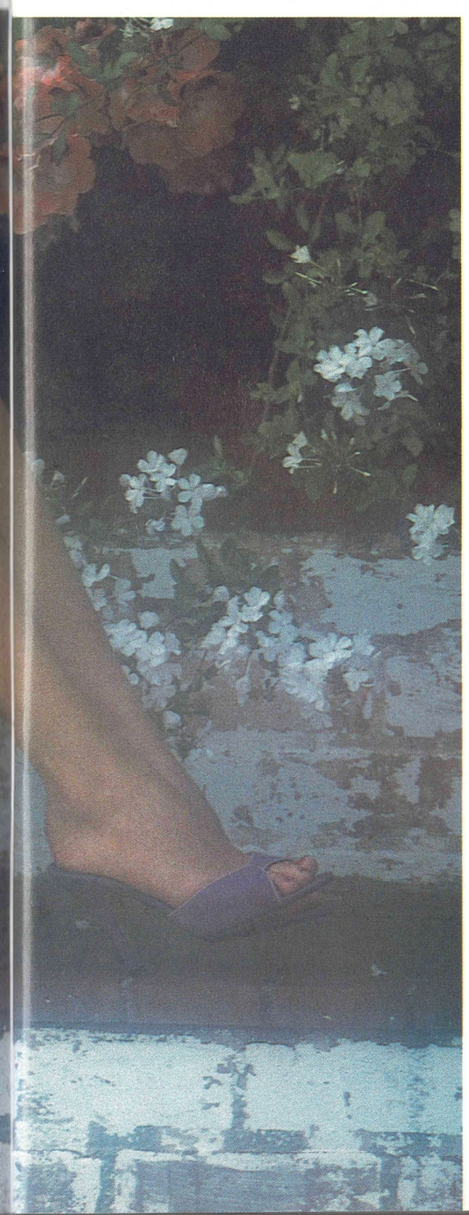
THE BODY ELECTRIC

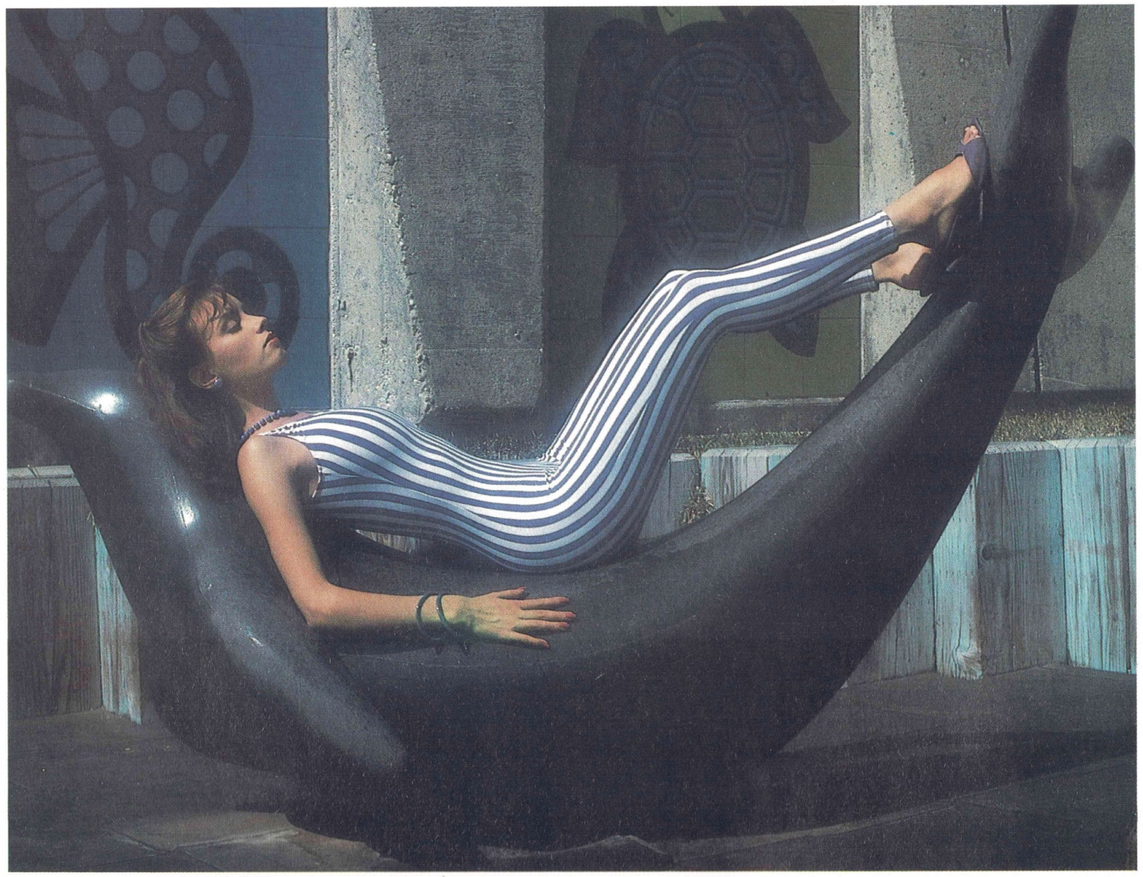
"Forget the gold, give me mountains of silver," smiles our delectable Pet Monique Gabrielle. "I'll go crazy entertaining myself." But how, we ask — feeding a vibrating bed? Making obscene phone calls? Nope. Our 20-year-old young modern is a certified electronic games freak. "I'm an addict. Anything that lights up and whistles gets my vote. I really get involved," she adds, a hint of double entendre in her little-girl laugh.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY EARL MILLER

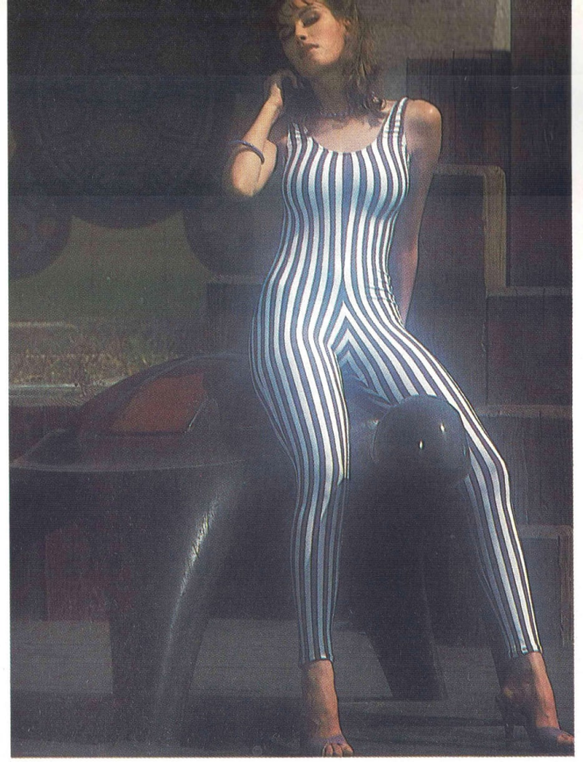
When she's not feeding slots, Monique
is feeding the fantasies and whetting the
appetites of appreciative audiences
in her jobs as an actress and a model.
Otherwise, her time is spent at a
secluded little nudist colony.



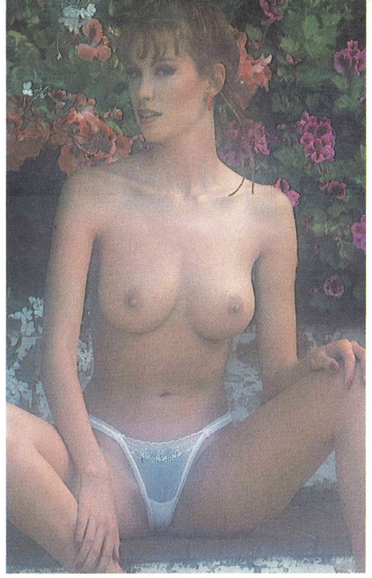




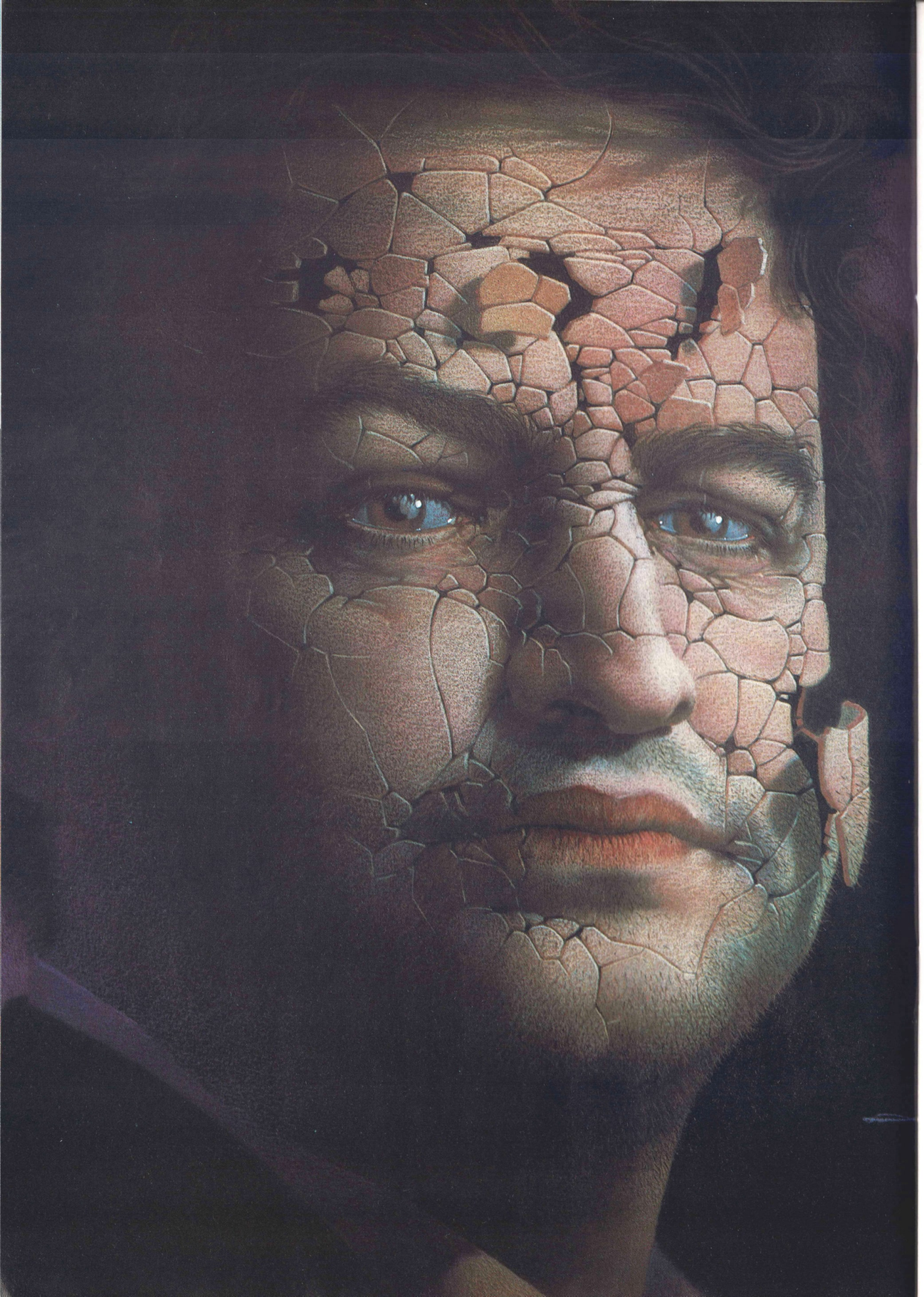
"Being naked frees your mind and your spirit as well as your body," Monique explains, "and there's no hassles with those pesky little white patches when your tan starts at the toes and doesn't quit all the way up."



Life in the "colonies" suits this uninhibited Miss perfectly. She sometimes even gets the chance to disprove the adage "two's company, three's a crowd." The more the merrier, according to Monique. She has to keep herself busy when she's away from her other favorite pastime.



"If I could think
up a way of carrying
small change at a
nudist camp, I'd be
on to a winner,"
she muses. Keep
ruminating, Monique.



Perhaps the most shocking fact about the bizarre death of one of the world's brightest comedy stars is that so many people have tried so hard to keep the truth from being told

JOHN BELUSHI'S LAST FIVE DAYS

BY ALLAN SONNENSCHEIN AND JAYNE DANA

Sometime on the cool morning of March 5, 1982, John Belushi died in Hollywood. The official verdict of the cause of death came five days later, and for many it was not unexpected: "acute heroin and cocaine intoxication." Another superstar from the precarious high-wire world of rock culture had been playing with fire once too often. Rather than being remembered as the cavorting Bluto from Delta House, or the hip Jake Blues, John Belushi has as his ghastly final image that of a man lying naked and dead in a rented bungalow, with multiple needle marks on his swollen arms. The gifted young comedian's legacy of laughter has quickly been transformed into a pot of gold for sensation-mongers, tabloid exploiters,

However, as is usually the case, the true story is much more complicated. Belushi, far from being the gentle, needle-fearing creature pictured by his family and fans, was also not simply a wild and hedonistic and degenerate drug addict, unconcerned about anything but the next chemically-induced thrill. The truth is that John Belushi had become a very sad and confused person, and the manner and timing of his death were extremely inconvenient for many people.

There are still some facts about the death of John Belushi that are not known. There are still some witnesses who, either from fear or from a desire for anonymity, have gone into hiding and have refused to talk about what they know. But this article, based on a six-month investigation involving hundreds of separate interviews, is as definitive an account as we are likely to have for a long time — if ever.

Obviously, in a situation as complicated and emotional as this one, there are sometimes conflicting versions of certain parts of the story. In these cases we have chosen to believe those people whose overall accounts were consistent with the truth as we learned it. Of course, whenever possible, we have corroborated our

ILLUSTRATION BY KUNIO HAGIO

story with as many eyewitness sources as we could discover.

One final note: it is evident that we were not present and on the scene in Hollywood during this fateful first week in March. We do not have tape recordings of Belushi's final conversations and so have had to reconstruct them from the accounts of those individuals who spent these days with him. Because people often tend to recollect conversations with slight inaccuracies, we are presenting the information we have received with the assurance that this article is as complete an account as is presently possible.

Among the new facts that you will learn are the following:

- John Belushi may have died from a heart attack.
- Contrary to a well-publicised article in the popular US *National Enquirer*, it is very unlikely that Cathy Smith injected Belushi with the fatal dosage of drugs.
- Cathy Smith, a heroin addict and the so-called mystery woman in the case, had, in fact, been helpful to the police in the past.
- Los Angeles Police Department officers discovered the body several hours before the time officially reported.
- The Los Angeles Police Department has apparently covered up very important circumstances surrounding Belushi's death.
- The Los Angeles Medical Examiner's office has refused either to conduct or to reveal crucial postmortem tests that could determine the actual cause of death.
- Belushi and other Hollywood superstars had been under surveillance by LAPD narcotics officers.

But perhaps the most surprising and shocking aspect of this story is the fact that so many people have tried so hard to keep it from ever being told.

"PIMPS, PROSTITUTES, AND PARASITES"

John Belushi spent the first five days of March 1982 and his last days on earth amid the glamor and sleaze of Hollywood. His days and nights were spent in the bars, nightclubs, hotels, restaurants, and other gathering spots for the supersonic living crowd along West Hollywood's Sunset Strip. It is an area where pimps watch their prostitutes gather for blocks, descending in droves on passersby and cruising cars whose occupants have a few dollars to burn. It is an area where out on the streets one can hear the decibel-shattering sounds of punk rock bands from places such as the Troubadour and the Roxy. Watching its costumed denizens, you can conclude that you're in the land of Oz.

In the words of one who lives and works on the Strip: "When you live in Hollywood, you are living with pimps, prostitutes, and parasites." With enough cash, credit cards or connections, life can be exciting on the Strip. Women are as available inside its bars and clubs as they are on its street corners. If you are famous enough on the Strip, you can get to see and be seen at such private "in" clubs as On The Rox. And most of all, if you are part of the West Hollywood scene, cocaine — the area's hottest commodity — is readily available all over.

Hollywood tends to bathe its obsessions in an aura of glamor and fantasy. Cocaine and cocaine dealers are no exception. Studio honchos and coke dealers will sit elbow to elbow inside the bars along the Strip, sharing drinks and intimacies. Few parties hosted by the stars will lack the presence of sleazy coke dealers. Even would-be rock and movie stars find it necessary to maintain drug connections along the Strip. Indeed, it can truly be said that cocaine is the great Hollywood equaliser, making it the most egalitarian

> "Do you have a couple of bucks?" John Belushi asked. Then he turned back: "Do you think you could score some heroin for me?"

community in the country. On March 1, 1982, John Belushi moved in.

MARCH 1, 1982 — 5 AM

The sky is still dark when the doorbell rings at 914½ Martel Avenue. April Milstead and her boyfriend, rock musician Charlie Pearson, are asleep. April — 26, thin, long-legged, her short black hair cut in punk style, and pretty — left her hometown of Washington, DC two years earlier to pursue a modelling career in Hollywood. April found herself in a city of thousands of pretty and ambitious women. Her career seemed less promising.

April's Washington boyfriend, Charlie Pearson, was a rock composer and singer who had also enjoyed some mild success, on a few occasions backing up the Rolling Stones. However, out West he was no more successful than April. Their relationship had often been stormy, partially because of their career frustrations, and also, according to Charlie, because of April's fondness for drugs.

April underplays her use of drugs, especially cocaine. But like Belushi and his West Hollywood acquaintances, she was a night person. Day and night are turned upside down in this world, where one parties all night and sleeps until late afternoon. A typical evening for April will begin at places like the Improv or the Comedy Store, with admirers and/or coke dealers paying for the drinks. Later on, the party adjourns to somebody's home, where a few grams of coke will be made available.

April had been introduced to Belushi a few months earlier. John was physically attracted to her and found her directness and candor refreshing. He spent the better part of an evening talking with her about various topics, one of which was the fact that April knew several drug dealers. At this time, April was convinced that John used only one drug — cocaine. Now he was back in Hollywood, and he was leaning on her doorbell at five in the morning.

"It's a *little* early, don't you think?" April greeted him. John explained that he had arrived in town only a few hours ago. "I feel like having breakfast," he said. "Do you have a couple of bucks?" Although a millionaire at 33, John Belushi had no money in his pockets. April loaned him five dollars, and while Charlie slept, the two chatted for a while. As he was leaving, John suddenly turned to her. "Do you think that you could score some heroin for me?"

April was shocked. It was the first time that she had gotten any idea that he had any familiarity with the drug. "Oh, yes," John explained, "I've snorted it a few times in New York."

April was not to be the only person surprised to learn that John was using heroin. Family and close friends still swear that the late comedian never used it. Danny Aykroyd told *Penthouse*: "He liked the coke, but the Jones thing [heroin] was not his thing." But Danny was wrong.

April told John to return later that afternoon. In retrospect, she realises that she probably should have simply refused John's request. But at the time, the promise of a week with John Belushi seemed exciting. To have turned him down may have excluded April from that week. Moreover, he could have scored heroin easily from other sources.

April's role in John's life was not a large one, but it was to be crucial. In addition to using her as a go-between, the star was somewhat infatuated with the struggling model. When she was around, John would often be indifferent and rude to others, especially her boyfriend, Charlie. One late evening at John's bungalow — in front of Charlie — John asked her to stay the night with him. April politely refused. Charlie sizzled and kept quiet. Despite their strange relationship, April says that they never had sex.

MARCH 1, 1982 — 4.30 PM

John Belushi parked his rented red Mercedes in front of the house on Martel.

It appeared to April that John had not slept since she saw him earlier that morning; but that was nothing unusual for the *Animal House* star, who would speed through several days and nights before crashing at somebody's house. John repeated his request for heroin.

April decided to have a serious talk with John. "John, look, you're a big boy, but I've got to warn you about the person I'm going to introduce you to. The heroin crowd is a lot differnt than everybody else." Belushi only laughed at April's admonition, and repeated with bravado that he had done heroin back east. A few minutes later the doorbell rang.

Catherine Evelyn Smith was approaching her 35th birthday. She had been around Los Angeles for several years and was well known in the Strip's various clubs and bars. Born near Toronto, "hard" Cathy had aspirations of becoming a rock composer or singer. Meeting no success, Cathy did the next best thing to keep her close to the world of rock 'n' roll, where she continues to fantasise that she will achieve her place of stardom: she became a groupie. Cathy, whose face and body do not hide a long period of drug abuse, had been, in the words of one who knew her, "a real beauty when she was 16." Her first sanctuary was in the home of singer-composer Gordon Lightfoot, a fellow Canadian.

Lightfoot was in love with the young Cathy, dedicating the song *Sundown* to his loss of Cathy when the two ended their romance. Cathy had entered Lightfoot's home as a rejected and unhappy teenager, having been placed for adoption when she was very young and feeling that she was never really loved in her adoptive home. Although many people have found Cathy coarse and seemingly cold, a few individuals, Lightfoot being one, have found something softer beneath "hard" Cathy's surface. One individual who lived with Cathy in Los Angeles described her as "a warm and trusting friend." A female friend called Cathy "fragile". These friends were to demonstrate their feeling for Cathy with loyalty and assistance after Belushi's death. When she flew back home to Toronto, broke and mentally anguished, Lightfoot was to help her financially, while others provided sanctuary in their homes.

After Lightfoot, Cathy moved on to others in the rock world, living at various times with members of the Rolling Stones and the Band. Some of the members of these groups make no secret of their dislike for her, yet others, Rick Danko of the Band being one, remain friendly with her.

Cathy became well-known for her ability to score hard drugs, in addition to her expertise in their intravenous use. Shortly after Cathy arrived in Los Angeles she was a heroin addict.

Cathy would stop taking drugs from time to time, replacing her addiction with alcohol. Her loud, often obnoxious behavior in the bars along the Strip resulted in not a few bartenders throwing her out. In January 1981 Cathy was stopped by a California State highway officer for a traffic violation. Her behavior caused the policeman to search her car. Heroin was found. By the time Cathy had to show up in court, a deal was arranged. She was placed on probation for the heroin possession and, as is typical in California, was expected to attend a drug rehabilitation program. Cathy never did attend; neither did she stop injecting herself with heroin. At the time of John Belushi's death, Cathy was still on probation.

Cathy Smith has told others that she had met John Belushi on the set of *1941*. in addition, there is some evidence that Cathy had spent some time with John only a month earlier in Hollywood. A free lance writer, Chris Van Ness, told *Penthouse* that he shared a table at a restaurant with Cathy Smith and John Belushi a little more

> Cathy Smith jabbed the needle into John's arm. For the next few days they were inseparable. Cathy later told us: "I kept that sucker alive for five days."

than a month before the star died. A security guard recalls delivering a message to Cathy for her to call John in New York while she occupied Belushi's bungalow at the Chateau Marmont in his absence. John's closest friend and business partner, Danny Aykroyd, refuses to believe this: "She was not a friend of his. She was a means to an end. Maybe she was just there. I never even met her."

April Milstead is sure that Cathy Smith and John were never friendly with each other before she introduced them to one another. "There's no way they knew each other. In fact," she says, "John took an immediate dislike to Cathy that day in my house."

John's seeming distaste would probably have been more intense if he had realised something that none of Cathy's friends, including April, knew. Sometime earlier, during her dealings with LA police officers, Cathy Smith had found a way to keep them off her back: by becoming friendly and cooperative. This fact, which has never been disclosed before, was to become a critical factor later that week in the police behavior in handling certain aspects of his death. However, on that evening of March 1, John welcomed Cathy's delivery of a small quantity of heroin. Then John turned to April and told her he wanted to leave, asking her to return to his bungalow at the Chateau Marmont. Cathy left. "I don't like her," John told April. "I don't need her crap." April reminded him that she had warned him earlier about Cathy Smith. "If I give her back the heroin," April told him, "that will be the last time I can get anything from her for you." John calmed down.

Meanwhile, Cathy was having trouble starting her car. She asked April if she could get a boost from John's red Mercedes. John was annoyed, but after April said that it would be a favor to her, John relented. Then something strange happened. John suddenly asked Cathy if she would like to come back to the bungalow. There is no reason to explain why John changed his mind, but if he had not, he might still be alive. Cathy agreed to go, and she followed April and John to the bungalow.

After they arrived, John and Cathy sat close together on a couch as Cathy shot herself up with heroin. John was fascinated — a far cry from a year or so earlier. A visitor to John's home on Morton Street in New York's Greenwich Village told *Penthouse*: "When I showed John my track marks, he was repulsed. He couldn't believe that I would use a needle."

But on March 1 John did not ask Cathy Smith to put away her needle. "Hey, I'd like to try it," he told Cathy. April, a witness to the scene, was shocked. "John, I didn't know you shot up." Belushi didn't respond, and Cathy expertly jabbed a needle into his arm. For the next few days they were to be nearly inseparable. In the words of someone who witnessed them: "Cathy was John's nurse. He trusted her and needed her more than anybody else." Cathy herself, with typical perversity, told us: "I kept that sucker alive for five days." The arrangement suited both individuals — John had an expert shoot him up, mostly with cocaine, while Cathy was able to score heroin to satisfy her addiction. It was a symbiotic relationship that was soon to end tragically.

MARCH 2, 1982 — 1.00 PM

By Tuesday, another female had joined the party. Leslie Sharon Marks was young and attractive, and Cathy Smith took an instant dislike to her. But whatever Leslie may have meant to John, she was no replacement for Cathy Smith. One source told us that "John would get a shot, and 20 minutes later he would beg Cathy for another. It went on like that into the night." John would never inject himself, trusting his nurse to inject him. In addition to being injected with cocaine. "John was snorting so much coke that his nose was bleeding," someone else reports. Only one incident marred the party atmosphere that evening

and early morning at the bungalow, and that was when Cathy Smith demanded that Leslie Marks leave: "You're just a baby. We don't need any kids here."

MARCH 3

John was going full-steam ahead. He was maintaining himself on cocaine and heroin and little else. He never slept, partying in between business deals with the studio on his rejected script for a movie called *Noble Rot* — a rejection that caused him to fall into a deep depression. It was becoming obvious that he could not continue on this way. For a healthy person it would have been impossible, and John Belushi was anything but in good shape. He was terribly overweight and suffered from an enlarged heart. Although only 33, he had the body of a much older man.

Early in the morning of March 3, John was alone at the bungalow. Cathy and the other partygoers had gone their separate ways and John was exhausted, tiring of the whole Hollywood scene. At four o'clock in the morning John took the Mercedes out of the garage and drove a few blocks to an all-night diner, the Beverly Hills Cafe, for breakfast.

Billy Kopecky is a 27-year-old rock musician awaiting stardom. While Billy waits for his breakthrough to fame, he pays his bills by driving a taxi all night in the city of Los Angeles. Billy is very familiar with the Hollywood drug scene, and when not working is a frequent visitor to the same rock club that John Belushi favored. That morning he was having breakfast at the Beverly Hills Cafe.

"I was waiting for my food when John walked in," Billy told us. "I think he wanted to be alone. He came in alone and sat two seats away from me at the counter. He didn't take a menu. He just ordered eggs." Billy did not want to bother John, and while he waited for his order to be served he read the newspaper. John leaned across the empty stool and asked to borrow a section of the newspaper.

"He started talking off the wall about how he should go to El Salvador, that there was a lot going on there. He felt it was an important place to be. He was kinda expressing negative feelings about being in Los Angeles. He started talking about a movie script I think he wrote. He was upset the options weren't going to be picked up as soon as he wanted them to be. He was kinda feeling screwed over by the business he was in. He felt he was being taken advantage of. He felt he should be given a little more priority than he was getting."

Billy told us that John did not appear high when the two met, and that the comedian "wasn't what I call real depressed, but more like upset. When he walked out, I asked him if he would like to smoke a joint. He said, 'Yeah.' We went over to his car and got in. It was the Mercedes. The red one. I didn't have any rolling paper on me, and I asked him if he had any. He said that he didn't.

"He reached into his pocket and pulled out one of those little 'snow seals' and poured some coke on me. He opened up the glove compartment and poured it out on there. He said, 'Well, here, you can do some of this.' So with the coke on the glove compartment, at exactly that time, a Beverly Hills patrol car cruised by and pulled into the parking lot across the street. The car was facing directly at us with the lights still on it. I looked at John and said, 'they come here and have breakfast here a lot. It ain't a good place for you to be pouring cocaine out in your car. Let's split and go someplace else."

"So he backed the car up, hit the curb, pulled it forward, and hit the curb again. He wasn't high from the cocaine, just nervous. Then he looked at me, gave me one

> Belushi's death would have been more embarrassing to the police had it been known that Cathy was involved with them

of those Belushi looks with his eyebrows, and asked me: 'Well, how am I doing?' I said, 'You're doing just fine, you're in an expensive car. You're in Beverly Hills and you're a celebrity. You got nothing to worry about.'

"When the cocaine was gone, he said: 'You can't have anymore.' I said that I didn't want anymore. Then he looked hurt and said that he was hanging around with the wrong people. They were taking advantage of him. It just seemed that he wasn't comfortable with the people here in Los Angeles. It seemed that he didn't trust me, even though I didn't give him any reason not to."

John left Billy to return to his bungalow, but didn't stay there long. He was tired, and the phone at the Chateau Marmont never stopped ringing. He needed to sleep, to come down from his frantic activity. He headed for the apartment of Leslie Sharon Marks, where he collapsed into some desperately-needed sleep.

Throughout the day there was some concern about John Belushi's whereabouts. April, who was calling the bungalow all day to try to retrieve Charlie's guitar, kept getting a busy signal. She knew John was not with Cathy, because Cathy was calling April to find out where her patient was that day. Finally, April and Charlie drove to the Chateau Marmont. When they entered John's bungalow, they found Belushi's friend and physical trainer. Bill ("Superfoot") Wallace was on the telephone. Wallace had the task of looking after John, and the karate star had lost sight of his wayward charge. Wallace was calling all over town in a futile effort to locate John. At one point during the visit, Wallace turned to April and asked: "Are you the one selling John all that coke? I mean, it's okay for him to do some, but it's getting out of hand." April told Wallace that she was not John's drug supplier, and then decided to leave the bungalow. She told Wallace that John might be at Leslie's apartment.

MARCH 4, 1982 — 9.00 AM

The telephone is ringing in April Milstead's apartment. She answers it, and before she can get past "hello" she hears John Belushi's frantic voice: "Where's Cathy? Do you know where she is?" After April tells John that she has no idea where Cathy Smith is, 10 minutes later the phone rings again. "April, it's John, did you hear from Cathy yet?" And so it goes on for most of the morning. John Belushi is calling all over to locate Cathy. He's awake and ready to be shot up again.

At approximately one o'clock John and Cathy Smith arrived at April's apartment. April was on the telephone, but from her vantage point she watched Cathy jab a syringe into the star's arm. April was getting nervous watching the couple, who were giggling and talking loudly. Before April finished her conversation, Cathy and John got up to leave. April, very annoyed, asked where they were going. John said they were going to visit a friend, *Saturday Night Live* writer Nelson Lyon. John told April that he would come back to pick her up later, then they all would party at the bungalow. It was April's good fortune that he did not. Within 24 hours John Belushi would be dead.

MARCH 4-5 1982 —
EVENING AND EARLY MORNING

By the time of John Belushi's final party on earth, Los Angeles narcotics detectives already knew about his drug purchases. He was to spend a good part of his final hours with another notable whose contacts with Belushi had surfaced in city narcotics officers' surveillance — Robert De Niro. An undercover narcotics officer told one of the *Penthouse* writers that De Niro and several of the individuals he spent his time with in Los Angeles were part of an ongoing investigation. But, he was quick to point out, as were other cooperative police sources, movie stars do not get busted in Los Angeles — not where the studios still wield great power. De Niro and Belushi, neighbors in New York City, were also neighbors at the Chateau Marmont.

Late in the evening of March 4, John, Cathy, De Niro, Robin Williams, and veteran character actor Harry Dean Stanton all found themselves at a private club upstairs from the Roxy called On The Rox. Several times John left the table, and it was apparent that he was doing drugs. At about one o'clock in the morning the party broke up. With the exception of Stanton, the party, including Nelson Lyon, was to meet back at John's bungalow. It has been reported elsewhere that upon leaving On The Rox John made another purchase of drugs in the parking lot. It was typical of the whole week. John Belushi paid for all the drugs consumed and snorted that week. A notable exception was when one of the Belushi group insisted that John take 50 dollars from her, as she had become disgusted with everybody living off the star. "Are you sure that you want me to take it?" John asked her. She answered: "John, I sure as hell can't afford it, but it would make me feel a whole lot better if you would take the money." Belushi smiled and took the money.

It is difficult to estimate how much John Belushi spent for drugs during his last week. *Penthouse* did learn from a family source that earlier in the day before he died, he had tried to obtain $1200. Ostensibly, the money was to be for the purchase of a guitar. John never did buy one, as the only guitar found after his death was the one belonging to Charlie Pearson. The same source told us: "I've always assumed that the money went for drugs."

It was now early Friday morning at the bungalow. If there was any place to guarantee privacy, it was inside one of the bungalows of the Chateau Marmont Hotel. Security guards and other hotel personnel have told *Penthouse* that the use of drugs at the hotel is a common occurrence. One hotel employee told us that he had had to admonish Belushi to keep his door closed because the smell of marijuana was becoming too obvious. All in all, it was the perfect setting for what was to go on inside Bungalow No 3 — John Belushi's final home.

People came and went that early Friday morning at John's bungalow at the Chateau Marmont: Cathy Smith, Nelson Lyon, Robin Williams, Robert De Niro, an unidentified member of the Blues Brothers Band, and others. There was plenty of cocaine, and when it ran out, John hopped into his car to get some more.

The party began to peak at around three o'clock in the morning. There are conflicting reports as to who was at the bungalow at that time. Cathy Smith's statement to the police indicates that after Robin Williams and Nelson Lyon left, between 3.00 and 3.30, she and John were left alone in the bungalow. So far, both Williams and Lyon have refused to discuss publicly the events of that evening — Lyon, in fact, threatened to "blow away" a *Penthouse* reporter if he showed up at his door. But, as one narcotics officer told *Penthouse*: "It's hard to believe who is telling the truth, because they all lie for their own purposes."

At approximately 3.30 am of March 5, Cathy says that she injected John Belushi with cocaine. The *National Enquirer* claimed, in an article now repudiated by Cathy, that this was the "coup de grace" that ended his life. However, if — as she claims — this was the last time that she shot him up, then the so-called coup de grace was probably administered by someone else. A source close to acting chief medical examiner/coroner Ronald Kornblum has told us that Belushi had injected or ingested drugs for the last time well after 3.30.

If Cathy Smith did not inject John with the fatal injection, who did? It is unlikely that John could do it himself. His week-long dependency on Cathy Smith indicates his need for a helper. A police source has told us of a cryptic message left at the hotel's desk for Belushi on the morning of his death. The message read: "John, welcome back to earth. Joey."

Who is Joey? The police say they do not know. Cathy Smith has told us that she has no idea who the person may be. The Belushi family has told us the same. The police aren't even certain how the message was delivered. Joey remains a mystery, as well as the message's meaning.

The fact that Cathy Smith has given several versions of what took place at the bungalow after 3.30 is very problematic in the various versions; a gap exists for the hours 3.30 to 6.30am. There is a report from a hotel worker that John took the car out during that time, but it is unclear whether John was by himself. The official police report picks up at 6.30. The information contained in it was mostly provided by Cathy.

At 6.30 John decided to take a shower. When he left the bathroom he complained to Cathy that he felt chilled, and the heat in the bungalow was turned up. At about eight o'clock John was ready to get some sleep and went to a separate bedroom, leaving Cathy in the other room. "He lay on his right side and was seen to be shaking and wheezing [the decedent is reported to have a sinus problem]. The female friend went into the living room, and at 9.30 she heard a loud wheezing coming from the bedroom."

Cathy was concerned about John's breathing, and entered the bedroom. She awakened John to ask him if there was anything wrong. He told her that he was fine, and before leaving him again, Cathy gave John a glass of water. "At 10.15 she looked in on the decedent, saw he was covered with a blanket and appeared to be

"Waiter, there's a flyer in my soup."

BELUSHI

sleeping. She then left the location to get something to eat, taking the decedent's car."

What is true and what is untrue in the official version is too often a guessing game. For example, *Penthouse* has learned from the breakfast maid at the Chateau Marmont that a woman she later identified as Cathy Smith called for room service that morning at approximately 7.00am. The maid delivered the continental breakfast to Bungalow No 3 at close to eight o'clock. It was breakfast for one, and the maid never did see John Belushi.

Furthermore, a friend of Cathy's, Bonnie Schact, told us that Cathy visited her home at about 10 o'clock that morning, driving the few miles in John's Mercedes. Bonnie is adamant in her belief that Cathy left John Belushi alive and well at the bungalow: "I know that she never had any idea that he was dead. I'm sure of that. There's no way she could have acted as she did. There's no way she would have walked back into that police mob. No way! She would have parked the car down the hill and ran. I know that she did not know [John was dead]."

In a conversation with *Penthouse* writers in a Toronto bar, The Parson's Nose, Cathy swore that she wouldn't have left John if she believed anything was wrong with him that morning. Whether or not this is true, we have learned that after she left, John Belushi — either dead or alive — was visited at his bungalow.

The people who arrived, at approximately 10 o'clock that morning, were not friends, family, or drug dealers. They were Los Angeles Police Department detectives. Their presence has been made known to us by three individuals present at the hotel that morning. None of the three parties is involved with John Belushi or his acquaintances. Two of the witnesses also have said that a black and white patrol car was present between 10.30 and 1.00am. In fact, one of the witnesses was stopped by the detectives when she attempted to enter the bungalow. Later, this witness was warned specifically not to discuss this incident with *Penthouse*.

As all this was going on, April Milstead was calling John's bungalow. April was upset with John about the previous evening, when John, Cathy, and Nelson failed to pick her up for a night on the town. April had waited for several hours the night before for John to call her from Lyon's house. Fortunately for April, he never did. She was not present at the bungalow for the final party. When April called that morning, the hotel operator asked her: "Are you a member of the Belushi family?" She said that she wasn't a family member, but that John would accept her telephone call. The operator told April that instructions had been given her not to let any calls through to the bungalow. April simply left her name.

"Hey, the Lord really does move in mysterious ways."

An hour or so later, there was a knock at April's door. Two LAPD detectives announced that they were there because there was a report of "two black prowlers in the neighborhood." April told the officers, who had made their way into her apartment, that she knew nothing of prowlers in the area. When the detectives began to look around the apartment, April became concerned and protested. At that point they requested that April accompany them "downtown". Confused, April and Charlie Pearson left with the officers. They did not go downtown, however, but rather to the Chateau Marmont. When they arrived at the hotel, April's first thought was: "My God, John's been busted for drugs." Soon she was to learn the harsher truth. April has never doubted that when she called the hotel at 10 o'clock, the police had already been there.

Sometime after April called the bungalow, the telephone in John's room was taken off the hook. According to the policy report, Bill Wallace arrived at the bungalow at 12.30 and, using his own key, entered. He saw John "lying on his right side in a tight foetal position" and immediately knew that his friend was in trouble. The official version continues that Wallace called for help and, while he waited for paramedics, attempted to revive John. Within minutes, Rescue Ambulance 23 arrived, and "death was pronounced at 1245 hours."

There is a conflict between what was told the police and what *Penthouse* has learned in its investigation. Interviews with hotel personnel indicate that Wallace arrived at the bungalow sometime before noon, and that he was in the room for 15 minutes before the telephone was placed back on the hook. At that point, the telephone rang, and Wallace screamed into it: "He's dead!"

After Wallace's cry into the telephone, the hotel sent somebody to the bungalow to assist him. The hotel worker (who has requested anonymity) knocked on the door to John's bungalow. According to the worker, Wallace initially refused to allow him into the bungalow, but after about five minutes of arguing with Wallace that he was there to assist, the worker was let in. He has reported to *Penthouse* that John was still in the bed, and that no attempts to revive him had been made. "Give him mouth-to-mouth resuscitation," Bill was told. "I don't know how," was Wallace's reply. The hotel worker then said: "Listen, he's your friend. I'd feel funny putting my mouth to him."

John's mouth and nose were full of mucus, and the hotel employee cleaned them out. Finally, Wallace attempted mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Of course, it was to be futile. The two attempted heart massage, but that, also, was too little too late. At last paramedics arrived. They were to be no more successful in reviving John Belushi. Later on, police homicide detectives detained and questioned Wallace for six hours. Police deny that a record exists of this interrogation. Wallace has refused to discuss the matter with anyone.

Within minutes of Belushi's death being pronounced, the media circus began. Interestingly, the first statement by the LAPD said that he died of natural causes.

While Wallace and Bernie Brillstein, then John's agent, were being questioned by Hollywood's homicide detectives, Cathy Smith, driving Belushi's Mercedes, turned off Sunset Boulevard into the access road for the Chateau Marmont.

An LAPD police officer stopped the car, and said to Cathy: "Lady, do you know that you are going the wrong way on a one-way street?" Cathy, who police acknowledge was probably under the influence of heroin or alcohol, smiled and said: "But this is the way John always went." "John who?" Cathy was asked. "Why, John Belushi," she responded. Cathy was then quickly pulled from the car and taken into the bungalow area behind the hotel.

An LAPD narcotics officer later told us that Cathy was not informed of her rights, but that homicide detectives took her purse and handcuffed her. Inside her purse was a syringe with some toilet paper sticking to it. Narcotics were later discovered on this material. Homicide detectives then took Cathy to a patrol car and drove her to the Hollywood division; again, she was not informed of her rights. Inside the Hollywood station house Cathy was questioned for about an hour. She was not charged under California law for possession of drug paraphernalia. Curiously, the police failed to have her sign the statement.

The LAPD Hollywood homicide detective who questioned Cathy on March 5 told *Penthouse*: "Sure, I'm basically satisfied with what she told us. Everything she told us was voluntary. You know, nobody is going to forcefully put something in your arm unless you're already out, beyond any kind of physical retaliation. There was no trauma to his body whatsoever. She did not tell us if she injected John."

Of course Cathy Smith did not tell homicide detectives that she injected John Belushi with drugs. She disclosed in the *National Enquirer* that she jabbed John's arm with needles. Hollywood homicide detectives insisted that John's death was due to an accidental overdose that, detectives were certain, was self-administered.

For the last several months the LAPD, especially its Hollywood division, had been beset with various scandals, making the department especially nervous about the media spotlight that focused on it after the death of John Belushi. Earlier, several detectives had been placed under investigation for break-ins into local businesses. At about the same time, some Hollywood division officers had been charged with having sexual relations with underage Explorer Scouts. Since the start of 1982 there had been several administrative changes made at the Hollywood division. The death of Belushi was clearly an inconvenient problem that the police wanted to sweep away with dispatch. Two months after his death, we were told emphatically by Captain Mark Stevens that "our investigation into the death is concluded. Unless there is something that is going to come out of right field, something that we are totally unaware of or is unexpected, our investigation into the death is concluded. It's an accidental overdose."

Of course, Cathy Smith's subsequent public acknowledgement that she shot Belushi up with drugs forced the police to re-open the case. But we could get no satisfactory reply from the police about why Cathy had been allowed to leave the country before all the facts had been determined. After all, we asked, Cathy had been caught with drug paraphernalia on her person. The police could easily have detained her. "It's a misdemeanor. She voluntarily gave it to us. It's a very low-grade misdemeanor" was the police response. The mystery was solved when we learned that Cathy Smith had been cooperating previously with the police. Clearly, the very inconvenient timing of John Belushi's death would have proven more than embarrassing if it had been known that she had been involved with the police.

> If Cathy Smith did not give Belushi the fatal injection, who did? It is unlikely that John could do it himself

The police inefficiency also extended to the very cause of John's death. We were told, for example, by one of the detectives: "These overdose deaths are very common in Hollywood. The only reason that this one is important is because he's an important person. But they're very common, and he had the exact symptoms I've heard time and time again."

But John Belushi did *not* really "have the exact symptoms" common to heroin and/or cocaine overdoses. On our request deputy chief medical examiner Michael Baden of Suffolk County, New York, a forensic expert who served on the House of Representatives' Select Committee on Assassinations for Congress, reviewed the conclusions of the Los Angeles medical examiner's office and the LAPD. Baden said that if Belushi did indeed shower at 6.30, as Cathy Smith reported to the police, then it would be extremely improbable that he died from the heroin injection he apparently received three hours earlier. A victim of a heroin overdose, Baden explained, will go into a coma almost immediately or, at the latest, within two hours after the injection, and in either case will never regain consciousness.

Baden told us that "while it appears *from the information available* [italics added] that John did die of a drug overdose, an important part of the autopsy examination was not included in the autopsy report." This was a microscopic evaluation of John Belushi's tissues, with which, Baden explained, a pathologist could exclude other possible causes of death, such as a heart attack. This evaluation would have been especially important in John's situation, because he had an enlarged heart for a man his age and could very well have died from a heart attack.

Pam Jacklin, John's sister-in-law, told us in late May that a microscopic evaluation had been conducted on John's body, and that she had been promised a copy of it several weeks earlier. We contacted acting chief medical examiner/coroner Ronald Kornblum's office for a copy, but we were told that they had never run it.

It is interesting to note that this test, even if not performed back in March, could still be run today. But when we made such a request, it was denied by the medical examiner's office because "it is too expensive to the county." The test costs approximately $246.

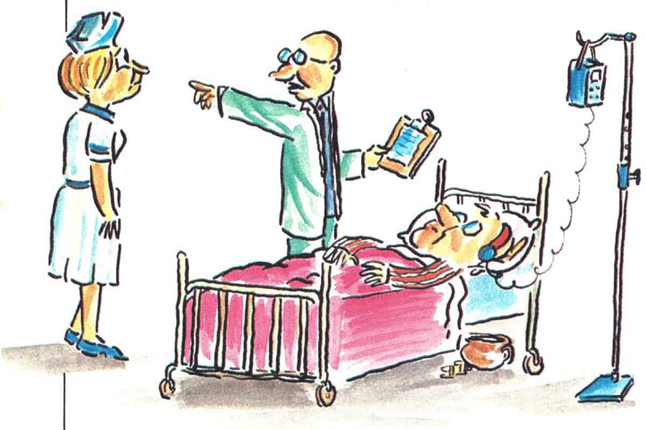
On March 9, 1982, John Belushi was buried in a small Martha's Vineyard cemetery. It is now time for the Los Angeles Police Department and the Medical Examiner's Office to end the cover-ups and confusion surrounding Belushi's death. Only they can finally explain the roles of Cathy Smith, Nelson Lyon, Robert De Niro, and others in this story. Only they can explain what the LAPD officers were doing at Belushi's bungalow before Bill Wallace arrived to "discover" Belushi's body. Only they can tell us once and for all exactly why John died.

John Belushi was possibly his own worst enemy — racing through his last days on little more than heroin and cocaine, running every second to avoid the despair that he knew would eventually catch up with him. But for many, many years John gave us all much pleasure, much laughter. For that we owe him, at the very least — finally — the truth. ○

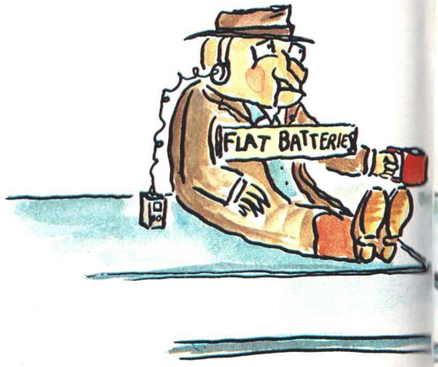
Headphone Fever

BY PHIL SOMERVILLE

If Cliff Richard sings about something you can bet it has reached all levels of society, and over the last two years that is exactly what has happened with mini tape players and headphones. Being wired for sound is becoming as much a part of life in the Eighties as pollution, construction work, traffic congestion, shabby public transport and all the bad aspects of life in the city; why not block out city noise with sounds? Sydney cartoonist Phil Sommerville was attracted by the bizarre sight of aurally isolated people walking the streets and offers these comments . . .



"Hurry, call the Red Cross! We're completely out of Kamahl!"



"I can hear the sea . . ."

Australian politicians' traditional perks are taxing more than the electorate's patience

THE POLITICS OF EXPEDIENCY

BY MUNGO MacCALLUM

While addressing a recent conference of moneylenders Treasurer John Howard mentioned, with the air of one who has just made a surprise discovery, that Australia had two long-standing traditions. The first of these was: "If there's a rort, be in it mate"; and the second was: "Give the other bloke a fair go."

With the kind of desperate optimism displayed by an undischarged bankrupt who enters an expensive restaurant and orders plate after plate of oysters in the hope of finding a pearl with which to pay the bill, Howard went on to express the view that the latter attitude was now winning; that Australians were about to enter a kind of moral millennium in which no-one tried to cheat on his income tax.

At much the same time, Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser launched one of his sporadic attacks on tax avoiders, whom he described as being quite un-Australian and almost as bad as the trade unionists who held the country to ransom. Fraser even hinted that if things failed to improve he would have to consider retrospective legislation — a suggestion shrilly repudiated by Howard on the following day. It need hardly be added that Fraser's suggestion carried more weight than Howard's denial, and a thoroughly reluctant Liberal Party has since been dragged hysterically into what will certainly prove to be a most ineffective form of retrospectivity.

Running through both speeches was a sense of puzzlement, almost of betrayal: the current government, after all, has made things pretty easy for most of those people who are in a position to indulge in large-scale tax avoidance. Death duties and gift tax have been abolished, profit-taking encouraged, prices freed from even the moral restraints which operated before 1976, public health and education cut back to allow more and better subsidies for private areas, and overall, there has been a considerable redistribution of money and services in favor of the rich at the expense of the poor. Surely, then, the rich should not object to paying 47 cents in the dollar after these massive deductions? Well, how about 32 cents? Anything at all . . .?

The fact is, of course, that the rich have no intention of paying anything more than they have to, and no-one thinks very much the worse of them as a result. They are only doing what most people would do if they had the chance. The community resentment that does exist is not really directed at tax evaders, but at a government which has made it so much more difficult for wage and salary earners to join the rorts available to the self-employed, the executives with salary packages, and those in a position to convert income into capital. The general feeling is not so much that those who avoid tax are corrupt, but that those who can't are unlucky and those who can, but choose not to, are stupid.

Fraser and Howard profess to be surprised and hurt by this response to their high-minded rhetoric, but the government of which they are part has only itself to blame. Given the government's own track record, it is

ILLUSTRATION BY JENNY COOPES

hardly the stuff of which shock-horror headlines are made that the Liberals' constituents see nothing particularly wrong with the pursuit of a buck, and do not exactly retire weeping to the confessional when told by Fraser that they are naughty boys.

In fact, this government is more than somewhat schizophrenic in its attitudes to what may broadly be called public morality, and that does not only refer to the sexual kind — although there has been a vast amount of hypocrisy from certain ministers on that subject, too. Its opponents would accuse it of running one law for the rich and another for the poor, but the situation is a little more complicated than that. What the government appears to believe is that there are certain classes of people, and certain areas of politics and business practice, for which ordinary laws and indeed ordinary standards of behavior are irrelevant. The only crime is getting caught, and even then you can frequently bluff your way out of it.

For the rest of us, however, and especially for the anonymous poor who are most dependent on government services and public benefits, the most rigorous moral imperatives of *Boys' Own Annual* apply. The history of the Fraser government is studded with what are generally called "crackdowns" on "welfare cheats" — all of them highly publicised, violently emotive and largely ineffectual.

The most spectacular effort was of course the mis-named "Greek conspiracy case" which, according to the magistrate who presided over the 52-month, $7 million preliminary hearing, should have ended with the police, rather than the Greeks, in the dock for conspiracy. Apart from the extraordinary waste of time and money involved, the exercise — from the pre-dawn raids on non-English speaking migrants through the years of relentless, but as it now turns out, pointless persecution — must stand as one of the most distasteful in recent Australian history.

But that was merely the most noticeable of a series of more or less unpleasant episodes in which the bureaucracy had been ordered to spy on the activities of the less articulate sections of the community under the pretext of safeguarding taxpayers' money. Readers may recall the bed-sniffers from the Department of Social Security, whose job it was to ensure that women in receipt of the deserted wives' or single mothers' pensions did not have their boyfriends in to stay the night.

At the same time, of course, we were constantly being exhorted to produce "a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, come on Aussie come on, have a go you can do it" and to swallow the rest of the mindless gung-ho jingoism which normally characterises a society firmly based on the Protestant work ethic.

However, if you looked at the antics of the government itself, its air of moral stringency became about as convincing as that of the piano player at the brothel. As two more of his ministers were dragged kicking and screaming from the front benches earlier this year, Malcolm Fraser murmured sanctimoniously that the standards demanded in public life were harsh and the penalties for ignoring them severe. It can only be assumed that Fraser was talking about some other government, because the record of his own suggests that for the privileged few, public life can be one long rort.

The disaster-list of ministers who have left the Fraser government for one reason or other over the years has been printed often enough to make it as familiar as the Australian cricket team. What is not so

Some politicians have actually prospered far beyond their rightful expectations had they stuck to the straight and narrow

generally realised is that practically none of the ministers who have felt it necessary to resign from the Fraser Cabinet have suffered more than a temporary setback to their careers. Some, indeed, have actually prospered far beyond their rightful expectations had they stuck to the straight and narrow life in politics.

Take, for instance, the case of Ransley Victor Garland, or plain "Sir Vic", as he has been known to his chums since he rather unexpectedly retired from parliament, immediately after his re-election in 1980, to take up a KBE and the position of High Commissioner in London. Nothing in the early part of the man's political career gave any hint that he was destined for this plummest of all plum jobs. A sombre and somewhat nervy Western Australian, he fell into the safe seat of Curtin, vacated by Sir Paul Hasluck in 1969, and worked himself into the unimportant Supply Ministry two years later. During the Opposition years he placed himself firmly in the Fraser camp, and at the time of the 1975 crisis he seemed set to return to a steady if uninspiring career on the front bench.

However, during the excitement of the 1975 election campaign Garland got involved in some of the organisational aspects of politics, and as a result was publicly accused by an independent candidate in Canberra of offering a $500 bribe for the purpose of securing preferences for the Liberal Party. Garland was subsequently charged with a breach of the Electoral Act, and relinquished his newly-acquired Ministry for Post and Telecommunications portfolio in order to appear before a Magistrates Court.

Whenever this case is referred to nowadays, it is customary for Fraser Government spokesmen to snap back that Garland was completely cleared of the charges. This is, in fact, a little white lie. What happened was this: the magistrate found there was a prima facie case for Garland to answer, but refrained from sending him for trial, saying that no properly-instructed jury would convict. No properly-instructed jury was therefore given the chance to decide for itself, and Garland remained a Member of Parliament. After what many people regarded as a scarcely decent interval, he was reinstated in 1977, this time as Minister for Special Trade Representations and Minister for Veterans Affairs, which were still relatively junior positions.

At around that time, something unusual started happening to the affairs of three Perth companies of which Garland (a chartered accountant before he entered Parliament) was a director. Over a period of two years there was a series of somewhat complicated manoeuvres which ended with the companies going into liquidation. Commenting on this operation under Parliamentary privilege on December 3, 1980, Labor frontbencher Peter Walsh told the Senate: "That bears the hallmark of a dividend stripping operation. It is scarcely conceivable, and certainly strains credibility, that such multiple changes of ownership and a shuffle, across two States and a Territory, of share registries, directors, secretaries, managers and so on, with all the legal and administrative costs which would have been incurred in such moves, would have been carried out by companies which had only $500 worth of assets in the first place . . . The matter was touched on by way of a question asked in the House of Representatives during the Budget Session of Parliament. Whether the fact that it was raised is related to Mr Garland's subsequent decision to leave the parliament I am not able to say." Mr Garland did, however, leave the parliament, and emerged triumphant, complete with gong, to represent Australia at the court of St James. It is hardly necessary to add that he seems to have weathered the demands of political life without suffering undue hardship.

Another minister who unexpectedly resigned from parliament immediately after his re-election in 1980 was the then Minister for Administrative Services, South Australian John McLeay. Like Garland, McLeay had never given observers the impression that he was destined for the higher reaches of political life; and like Garland, McLeay was involved with various family companies. In March 1980 he and his immediate family left one of them (McLeay Bros Ltd) and a year later the company went into liquidation. In July 1981 that was followed by another McLeay company, Clinton Credits Pty Ltd, which was a finance organisation. Various aspects of the winding-up of the two companies were raised in the South Australian parliament on August 25 by the Leader of the Opposition in the Upper House, Chris Sumner. Sumner told parliament that it appeared Clinton Credits obtained money from the public and then lent it without security, at favorable interest rates, to McLeay Bros Ltd and to the Aileen Trust, a McLeay family trust. As a result of the liquidation of Clinton Brothers, said Sumner, about 80 small investors stood to lose more than $150,000. He asked how much McLeay had received for his share of McLeay Bros when he got out at a time when the company was clearly no longer viable and was being propped up by a finance company (Clinton Credits), apparently formed exclusively for that purpose.

Sumner's questions have not been answered, but in any case a grateful Fraser Government felt it necessary to ease any pain McLeay may have felt at the loss of his companies to the greatest extent the public purse would bear. For him was created the posting of Consul-General in Los Angeles, which sinecure has since been the subject of Parliamentary questioning because of the inordinate amount it appears to be costing in accommodation and expenses for a barely perceptible return.

We have detailed the cases of Garland and McLeay rather than those of some of Fraser's more notorious henchmen (Sir Phillip Lynch, forced to resign as Treasurer after numerous allegations of land dealings; Reg Withers, sacked after being found guilty of impropriety by a Royal Commission into an electoral redistribution; Ian Sinclair, tried and finally acquitted of 12 charges of forging, uttering and presenting false company returns; Michael MacKellar and John Moore, forced out after publicity over the illegal importation of a color television set, and so on) because they illustrate both Fraser's toughness and his vulnerability. Fraser has often been accused of disloyalty to his Liberal ministers, as opposed to his Country Party ones; but this is a trifle unfair. The record shows that he has never willingly parted with any of them, no matter how apparently damning the circumstantial evidence has been. It has only been when the public pressure has become intolerable that he has reluctantly agreed that they should stand down, at least until the heat went off — and even then the setback is seldom more than temporary.

So far, the only one who seems to have come out really badly is Withers, and this was less because of the gravity of his offence than because he has refused to lie low and play Fraser's game. Lynch went because there was an election campaign running, Sinclair when he was charged with criminal offences and MacKellar and Moore after every newspaper in the country had demanded it. In all four of these cases Fraser had been well aware of the circumstances for days, or even weeks before demanding resignations on a strictly temporary basis. Lynch has since left parliament in a blaze of untarnished sentimental glory, and Sinclair is of course back in his traditional position as Malcolm Fraser's chief enforcer. And no-one in Canberra seriously doubts that MacKellar and Moore will be reinstated as soon as is

Fraser is no financial whizz kid himself; his various businesses are run by accountants and he got rid of his family trusts some time ago

practicable. What Fraser is on about is not principle but expediency.

But the cases of Garland and McLeay go to the heart of Fraser's sensitivities. When Fraser first came to power, or rather thrust it upon himself, he demanded that his ministers relinquish all other jobs. This did not, of course, mean relinquishing their other income; only that portion of it earned by "personal exertion", a method of making a living of which most members of the Fraser government are happily ignorant. But this in itself did not quieten the rumblings which in Australia, as in other Parliamentary democracies, were starting to surface in regard to potential conflicts of interest.

Fraser therefore took a further step, which was to require his ministers to supply him with a schedule of "relevant pecuniary interests". This schedule was never to be made public, and in any case there was (and still is) some doubt about just which pecuniary interests are considered "relevant". However, given the Commonwealth's unquestioned power over corporations it would seem logical that the possession of family companies could easily lead to a conflict-of-interest situation. It therefore follows that if the letter, or even the vague spirit, of Fraser's guidelines was being observed he would have known of the juggling going on in the portfolios of Garland and McLeay.

Fraser is no financial whizz kid himself; his various businesses are run by accountants, and in order to maintain his simon-pure image he got rid of his own family trusts some time ago. But it is inconceivable that it would not have crossed his mind that the purpose behind the manoeuvres was most unlikely to be altruistic, and in fact bore all the characteristics of a classic tax avoidance operation. However, rather than blast the ministers involved as being thoroughly un-Australian and almost as bad as the trade unionists who were holding the country to ransom, Fraser said nothing to anyone (let alone the Treasurer, whom Garland had once been Minister Assisting), loaded the two with perks and gave them two of the cushiest jobs that public money could buy.

In the circumstances, Fraser's campaign for public honesty could hardly have been said to be off to a good start; what followed made it frankly ludicrous.

The former (Liberal) Victorian Government had commissioned a report on tax evasion (illegal) and avoidance (legal, but would cease to be so if the government could find some legislation that would stick). Some 900 companies were named as having taken part in "bottom of the harbor" schemes, which were in themselves illegal, but whose financial beneficiaries were still within the law. Among these beneficiaries was one Denis Byrne Horgan, who is a former Chairman of the Liberal Party of Western Australia's Finance Committee. This high-sounding title does not mean that Horgan had any input into policy-making, but simply that he was in charge of fund-raising; in political jargon, he was the bagman. Horgan claimed rather ingenuously that he had really known nothing of the tax avoidance operation from which he made a considerable profit.

For some time Fraser and his colleagues decided to ride this one out. There was no attempt to dissociate the Liberal Party from Horgan, who was allowed to retain his various governmental sinecures — a matter of concern in itself if he was really unaware of anything abnormal in the fact that he was offered considerably more than market value for a group of untaxed companies, and no questions asked. These sinecures included being Director of the Australian Industries Development Corporation (annual stipend $8500), a commissioner of the Australian Broadcasting Commission ($6800), a member of the Australia-Japan Foundation ($3000-$4000), a member of the Australian Manufacturing Council ($3000-$4000), a member of the Project Australia Council ($3000-$4000), a member of the

POLITICS

Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation ($120 per meeting) and a member of Aussat, the body set up to control Australia's domestic satellite system. With travel and expenses added, Horgan is therefore into the Australian taxpayer for about $30,000 a year, and it is to be hoped that he declares it as taxable income.

Despite considerable pressure from the opposition, Fraser was able to keep the lid on the Horgan affair for a couple of months; but when the Costigan Report emerged with some new information about Horgan's fellow West Australians the public debate hotted up, and Fraser's principles did another of their renowned somersaults. Horgan was an embarrassment; he should resign from the Liberal Party and from his public positions. Horgan simply refused, confident of the support of large numbers of Liberals (and indeed 14 backbenchers took the extraordinary step of signing a public declaration backing him against Fraser). After a week of frenzied negotiation, Horgan and Howard announced that the former had agreed to an investigation of his affairs, and while he would not resign from anything in the meantime, he was prepared to go trekking in the Himalayas until the heat was off. Heaving a sigh of relief, Fraser nominated Costigan as the investigator. Costigan said he would be delighted to do so provided he could investigate Horgan in terms of his original brief, which was the criminal activities of the Painters and Dockers Union. Fraser snarled back that this was not quite what he had in mind, and produced some Mickey Mouse terms of reference which were handed to another long-suffering QC. Horgan presumably laughed all the way to Annapurna.

Horgan is, of course, not alone in occupying highly-paid public positions; indeed, some of the other appointees lack even his elementary discretion. One of their most favored habitats is the Department of Primary Industry, currently administered by Peter Nixon. (This in itself is one of the more blatant conflict-of-interest situations within the government; Nixon is not only a dairy farmer, but a shareholder in the Murray-Goulburn Dairy Cooperative, on which he has twice had to make decisions when that company has been involved in alleged breaches of the departmental regulations. The fact that Fraser sees nothing anomalous in this makes one wonder why he ever bothered to go through the motions of setting up guidelines for ministerial conduct).

Primary Industry has always been a nightmare for advocates of efficiency in government, mainly because it has spent 25 of the last 30 years being a National Country Party pork barrel. As a result it has become not only grossly fat and lazy, but also demonstrably corrupt. The corruption came to a head publicly last year with revelations about one of the department's responsibilities, Asia Dairy Industries, a subsidiary of the Australian Dairy Corporation. This produced an inquiry by the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Government Operations, which among other things declined to accept protestations of ignorance of what was going on from Nixon's ministerial predecessor, Ian Sinclair. Countless individuals were named, many becoming the subject of police inquiries. It became clear fairly early in the piece that while it might have been hard to make criminal charges stick, a great many people should have been held up to public contumely and disgrace, and should have been struck from the public payroll forthwith. (It also became clear that under even the most charitable interpretation of the Westminster system, both Nixon and Sinclair should have been forced to resign on the grounds of ministerial incompetence, if nothing worse; but as mentioned earlier, Fraser is not overly keen on getting rid of ministers).

> Fraser produced some Mickey Mouse terms of reference which were handed to another long-suffering QC

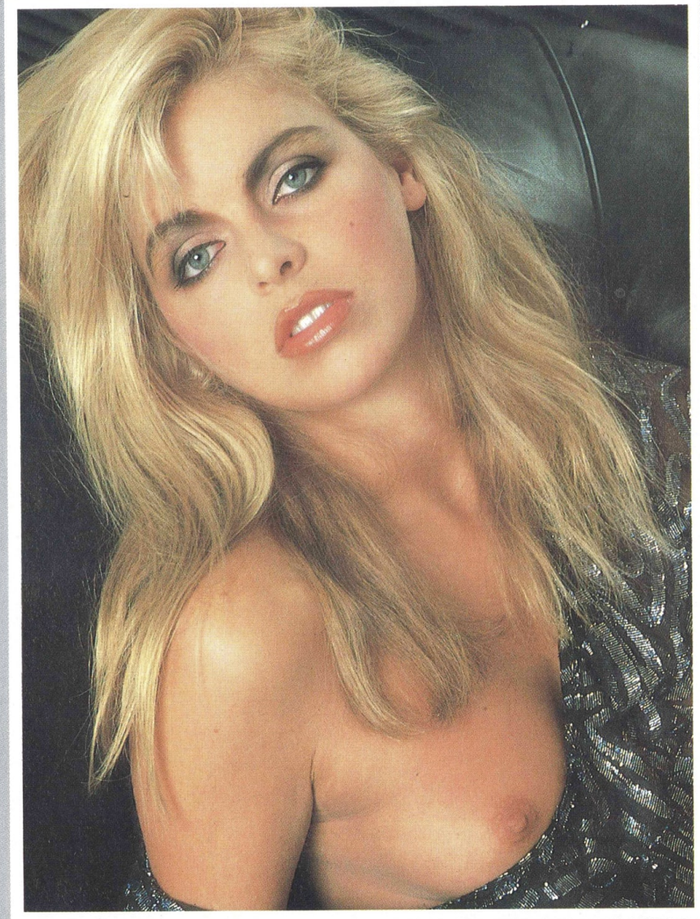
When the dust settled, however, there were no dismissals, no public exposures, and no resignations. The nearest thing to a scapegoat was one of Nixon's fellow Gippsland dairy farmers, a man named Bill Pyle. Pyle was demoted from the position of Deputy Chairman of the corporation to being a mere board member, in which position he survived another scandal earlier this year. Among other things, Pyle admitted disconnecting the speedometer of a vehicle provided by the corporation, which drew this comment from the Senate Committee: "The Committee concludes that it is impossible to establish the validity of Mr Pyle's claims for running costs in 1979 . . . we are not able to conclude whether Mr Pyle did in fact disconnect the speedo or whether he used the statement to attempt to explain the duplicated claims for expenses. Certainly it makes it impossible to establish the extent of the duplication. The Committee considers that Mr Pyle's behavior in relation to the speedo speaks for itself. We are not concerned to decide whether Mr Pyle's actions were, in his words, 'stupid more than dishonest', or whether they were dishonest more than stupid. They were certainly a combination of both."

Leaving aside the question of whether dishonesty and stupidity, in whatever proportions, are suitable qualifications for membership of the board of a large public corporation, it would seem that Pyle got off extremely lightly; in private enterprise he would surely have been sacked on the spot, rather than being demoted more than a year after his admission. But Pyle himself was extremely miffed. The interesting thing about his public statements was not an understandable resentment that he had been punished, however gently, for a comparatively minor offence while a lot of other people had gotten off scot-free, but a sense of outraged bewilderment that he should have been punished at all. One was left with the depressing feeling that Pyle believed that, in the current climate of public accountability, he had done absolutely nothing to be ashamed of. Be in it, mate!

This is the context in which Fraser is now posing as some kind of moral arbiter, delivering irrevocable demands for financial responsibility from the top of a mountain of documentary evidence which has somehow escaped the Divine shredder. It is doubtful whether anything he did now would persuade people that tax evasion is the moral equivalent, not of jay-walking, but of burning down schools, robbing orphanages, kicking cripples and starving to death the children of the poor — which, if you look seriously at the way the public sector works in a mixed economy, it is.

But he could try. If Malcolm Fraser is serious about convincing the rest of the country that the proper and appropriate course (as he would put it) is to concentrate our efforts towards the general rather than the particular good, he might care to reveal the accounts of his own financial dealings, not to mention those of his ministers, his party apparatchiks and the cronies appointed to public positions. He could then get down to some real legislation which would leave no excuses at all for the scandalous lack of prosecutions which has characterised his government's approach to financial morality, and apply it with all the rigor of the mildly hysterical rhetoric we had to endure over the latter part of last year. Since he won't do this, the rest of us can be forgiven for not taking his moral exhortations any more seriously than his election promises.

As has become painfully obvious over the last seven years, when Malcolm Fraser says we have to do this and that for the sake of honesty, decency, the fair go and the Australian way of life, he means that you do, and I do — but not old Malcolm. And that's an Australian tradition John Howard hasn't mentioned.

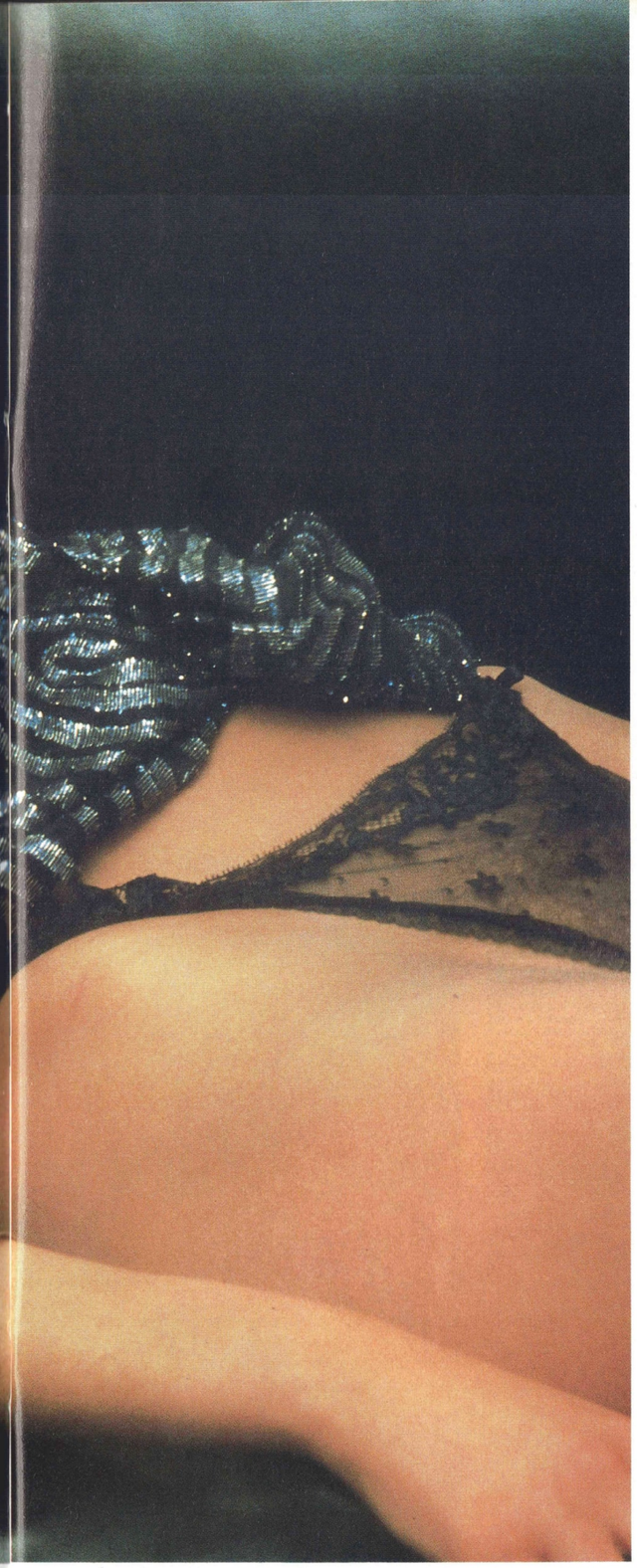


MANDY

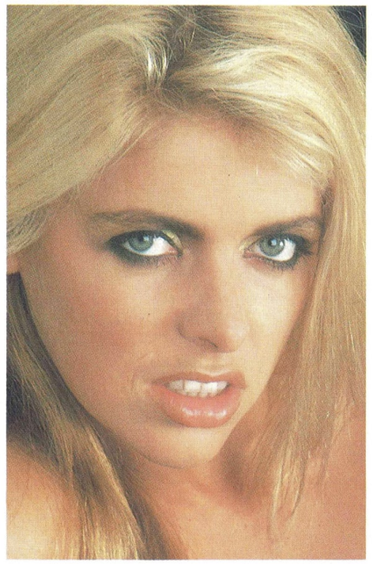
SITTING PRETTY

She was born 24 years ago in South Australia and she has roamed the world, but right now our smoky-eyed Pet of the Month Mandy Miller is sitting pretty in the Sydney suburb of Palm Beach. Amanda is exercising those supple curves in the blue Pacific and giving her thought power a strenuous workout plotting her future. As she puts it: "I'm taking a breather to figure out the rest of my life."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS DICKSON



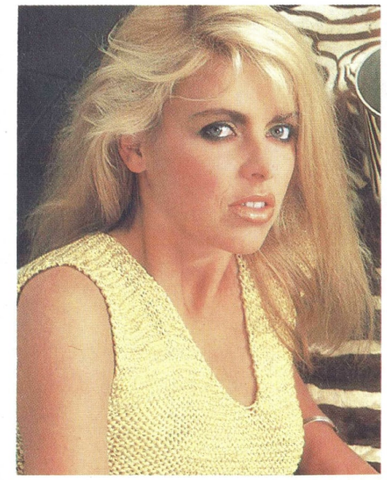
And it's not an easy decision for this vibrant young woman. An up-tempo lifestyle since she started modelling at 17 has left her doubtful of her ability to settle down.

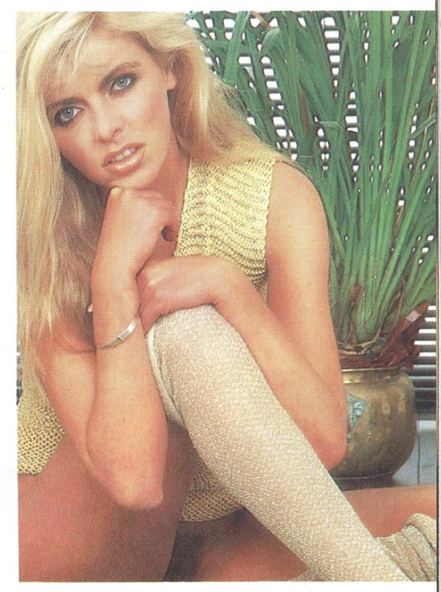


"I'm at a staging point, a watershed," says Mandy. "I know that I must establish myself in a solid career and I'm tempted towards advertising." A sound idea — Mandy is no dumb blonde, she's a quick thinker and her manner is affable and engaging.

"But there's a part of me that longs to get on the move again," she continues. "A little voice that whispers of lazy days in the Aegean, or of the lucrative lure of the Japanese modelling circuit." But Mandy admits she's seeking security, in her career and in her relationships, so that little voice remains a dreamy whisper.

"Emotionally, I'm happy at the moment," says our Pet. "And it's about time. I've been hurt many times and I was beginning to be wary of attachments. But I'm all right now, and my boyfriend is a bit of all right, if you know what I mean. I'm coming out of my shell."





Men are a constant in Mandy's life — with her charms, she's usually the main attraction wherever she goes. Those whom she allows close to her are gentle types with a sense of humor and no trace of chauvinism. "But I'm not a libber," says Mandy. "I love the nice things about me as a woman." Amanda, so do we.

MISS MANDY MILLER/PENTHOUSE PET OF THE MONTH

The worst drought in Australia's history may be the straw that breaks Fraser's back

THE RED LANDLORD

Sixty miles to the south-west of Athens lie the remains of a mighty ancient civilisation. Mycenae was an impregnable fortress, with walls surrounding it one kilometre long and up to 10 metres thick. And Mycenae was also a superb city, housing grandiose stone carvings, lavish palaces and large granaries. But in 1230 BC it collapsed. Palaces and granaries were raided, and even the city's satellite centres of Pylos and Tiryns started to crumble. Logically, the demise of such a great civilisation within 30 years must have been the result of an invasion. But recent evidence suggests that the invasion was not a military one, and that in fact the great Mycenaen civilisation self-immolated in a devastating and consumate drought.

If that seems like a chunk of history destined never to be repeated, think again. It was only a decade ago that an estimated 300,000 people perished under the relentless sun of the Sahel region in North Africa. The drought had been creeping from 1968, but in 1973 it struck with amazing vengance and apart from the obvious devastation of human and animal life, it also claimed the throne of Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie and sparked off a wave of racial strife in Nigeria.

And if you believe it can't happen here, think again. If the prophecies of Australia's late, great and uncanny long-range weather forecaster, Inigo Jones, are borne out during the next decade, droughts will reduce this country to its knees. In his controversial book *Nephelo Coccygia* (My Cuckoo Cloudland), Jones predicted that droughts will prevail over much of Australia from 1983 to 1992. Indeed, this view is shared by many traditional weathermen, who believe we are on the verge of another 40-year dry cycle — similar to that which was ushered in by the greatest drought on record at the turn of the century.

Regardless of spring rain this year, a dry autumn and winter again next year would

BY ROBBIE SWAN

PHOTOGRAPH BY TURNER–QUIRK

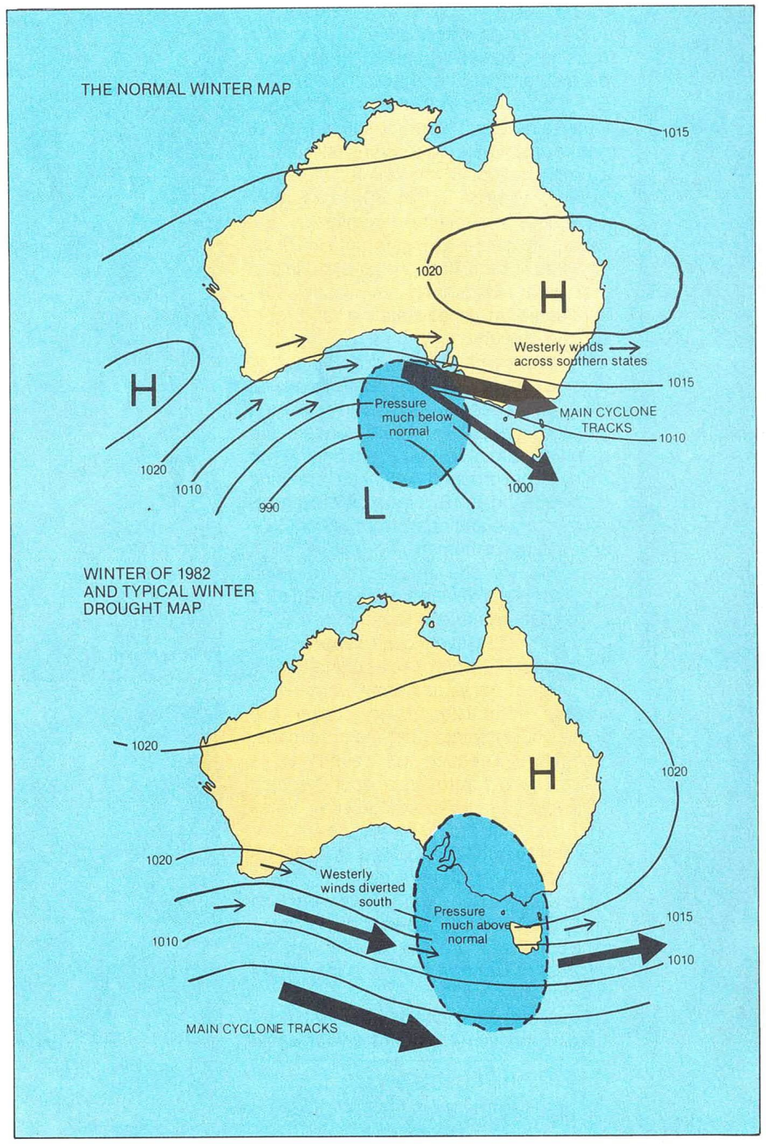
RED LANDLORD

devastate this country like never before. But even now the "Red Landlord" has extracted an extortionate rent from his unwilling Australian tenants.

Like it or not, we live in latitudes which house the world's great deserts. Although some areas of Australia are very wet, with annual rainfalls in excess of 500 cms, one-third of the continent receives 50 cms to 130 cms and the remaining two-thirds gets 13 cms to 50 cms. These figures, while indicating a dry country, still offer excellent farming opportunity, and in fact if these average rainfalls could be relied upon from year to year this country would very soon rank second only to the US among the world's primary producers. But the reliability of drought is the only constant we have, and as a result our primary production has developed as a unique sort of stop-start enterprise. Without droughts, this country would be rich beyond belief.

Droughts are simple: no rain where it is needed. (No-one ever heard of a drought in the Simpson or Sahara Deserts, because nobody expects it to rain there.) And droughts are a normal part of the oscillation and perturbation of the Australian climate. We should expect them. The fact that we are caught out by them over and over again is largely the result of human ignorance. But the reason the rain doesn't fall where it should (or where it did last year) is not so simple.

The dominant forces in the Australian climate are the huge circular masses of anti-clockwise-turning air which move west to east across the continent at about 800kms per day. In summer these "high pressure" cells centre themselves a few degrees south of their middle track, allowing "low pressure" cells (circular masses of clockwise turning air) to develop over northern Australia. These low pressure cells allow warm, moist air to flow in from the northern oceans, with heavy falls of rain resulting. In winter, the large high pressure cells move north and low pressure cells from the south spring up, bringing moist cold air and rain to the south of the continent.



Rain itself is dependent on two factors: moisture and a mechanism to cause it to fall. For moisture to arrive at a certain area, air streams are needed to pick it up where it is plentiful (mainly over oceans) and bring it to areas where it is not. A mechanism is then needed to provide uplift in the atmosphere so that the moisture can rise into the colder zones, condense, and fall to earth. The last three years in Australia have witnessed a constant lack of co-incidence between moist air flows and the uplift needed to make rain.

Cold fronts, which generally move up from the south-west in winter, often act as lifting mechanisms by "sliding" in under moist air streams, causing them to rise and then to condense into rain. But if the high pressure cells are too strong and too far south in the winter months, these fronts are "blocked" and slide away to the south-west of Tasmania before they can exercise their lifting effect over the mainland. Consequently, moisture can be everywhere but will not fall to ground.

Mountain ranges also act as lifting mechanisms for moist air and generally the higher the mountain range, the more predictable the rainfall. Australia has an average height above sea level of around 300 metres, which does not augur well for stable rainfall. The effect of the Great Dividing Range in trapping and lifting moist Pacific Ocean air is great for the coastal fringe, but dry news for those on the other side.

The intense and devasting drought in which we are now caught, like that of the Sahel, has been creeping up for some years. Farmers in western NSW and south-west Queensland were the first to be affected. As early as May, 1979 NSW Pastures Protection Districts began to be drought-declared. Since then a minimum of six areas have been declared at any one time. Our prime farming areas suffered below-average rain during 1980. The best rains for the year ended up in the deserts. 1981 rainfalls were average or only slightly below, but in real terms they were "tough turkey" for most Australian farmers, who by now needed substantially above-average rains to restore subsoil moisture. The early summer of 1981 saw the first real outcry from farmers and graziers. A few backbenchers caught wind of something — but while the PM was still getting wet at Nareen and Doug Anthony was wading knee deep in cream on the Tweed, it couldn't be all that bad . . .

And indeed things did look better as the year opened and February saw Aquarius the water-bearer pouring out a full pitcher into March and Pisces the fish. The fish swam smoothly for a while, but someone pulled the plug half-way through April and it started flopping around in dry creek beds and choking on red dust. And the dry winter of 1982 will stay with us long after it rains. Over most of southern and eastern Australia the 1982 winter rainfall was in the lowest 10 percent of all winter totals since records began. In more than half of Victoria and a vast area west of the ranges in NSW, the 1982 winter rains were the lowest ever recorded. And with two or three years of below-average rains beforehand, we suddenly had a national disaster of monumental proportions.

Major droughts seem to occur in Australia at regular 11 to 15-year intervals. The eight-year drought which ushered in the 1900s and culminated in 1902 has always been held to be the "Titanic" of all dry spells — virtually sinking Australia's grazing industry for a decade. The National Farmers' Federation now rates the current drought as the equal of that. Over half of Australia's 170,000 farmers are in real difficulty as a result.

At the time of writing, a staggering $2500 million has been lost to the drought. The winter grain crop is estimated to be down by 40 percent, accounting for nearly half of this figure. In some areas of NSW and Queensland production is down by two-thirds, with many farmers facing total crop failure. NSW, which supplies one-third of Australia's primary produce, is over 90 percent drought-declared. And even if the drought were broken tomorrow, net farm income for the 1982-83 period would still be down by nearly 50 percent.

But while droughts inevitably lead to severe financial losses in themselves, they also act as barometers of current financial trends. The period preceding the 1964-66 drought was marked by a huge rise in "on farm" expenditure. From 1950 to 1964, farm outputs increased by 60 percent while the rural workforce declined by 10 percent. Coupled with the fact that this drought came hard on the heels of a series of excellent seasons, farmers were overstocked and overdrawn to the hilt. As the farms started to wind down, the new headers and balers in the shed could not be stood down and continued to demand payment. Farmers lost out badly to the banks.

Since then, farmers have had closer liasons with banks and have become more astute in buying. But the cost of borrowing a dollar these days is much greater than in 1964. Interest on even small loans becomes impossible when nothing will grow. Add to this a farm inflation rate of 12.5 percent compared with the national average of 10 percent, and the rural economy is as ill-prepared for a major drought as it was in 1964, albeit for different reasons.

The drought has hit so hard that banks and lending institutions have stopped foreclosing on loans and overdrafts. By calling up overdrafts the banks would be left with large tracts of unproductive and unsaleable land. Sitting side by side with the cockies, waiting for rain, they at least retain good will — if nothing else.

As a result of previous dry seasons, the beef industry has been losing one million head of cattle every year for the past four years. This year one and a half million head of cattle will perish, along with six million sheep. With total meat exports at around $2500 million last year, the industry provides Australia with a large amount of export earnings. It also provides us with cheap meat. Good quality steak is now fetching up to $30 per kilo in some parts of the US and Japan, whereas we can still buy the best for around $7 per kilo. On a percentage value our primary products are among the cheapest in the world. A prolonged drought has the ability to send these prices through the roof, as Australians will begin to notice as soon as it starts to rain. For it is then that graziers will stop selling their weakened sheep and cattle to the slaughter houses in an effort to rebuild their decimated herds and flocks. On average it takes five years to build up a good herd and most drought-affected farmers will be starting from near scratch. So it will come as no great surprise to find that meat prices in this country will reach impossible levels over the next three years — if meat can be bought at all.

> The fact that drought relief wasn't entertained in the August budget was a clear indication of where most government heads were at the time — in the sand

National Farmers' Federation public relations officer Jim McNamara views the financial implications of the drought as decidely long-term. "Farmers can get over it and will get over it," he says. "But the reason the drought has hit so hard is that the rural economy has been suffering for four years now and farmers' profitability has been greatly undermined. A lot of that blame we attach to the government for creating a farm inflation rate 2.5 percent higher than the national average, which costs us $200 — $300 million each year. The government also controls exchange rate policies and they have been decidedly set to disadvantage the exporting industries such as the rural sector. Last year these policies cost the beef industry $100 million. The government has recently announced a $300 million drought aid package, but if we had the money in our pockets from a fair inflation rate and fair exchange rate, we would have ridden out the drought ourselves. We're not looking for handouts — only what we're due."

A recent survey conducted by the NFF showed that 60 percent of Australians were under the impression that mining industries were Australia's largest export earners. Claiming this was due in part to the mining companies' huge advertising campaigns and extraordinarily high government backing, the survey highlighted the dismal lack of concern Australians have for our rural industry. In fact, primary industries account for nearly 50 percent of our export earnings ($8000 million), with mining down around 27 percent. More than any other industry, the primary sector underwrites the Australian economy. Since 1975 (curiously enough the year that the Liberals came to power) farm costs have increased by 107 percent whereas farm incomes have increased by only 85 percent.

Politically, the drought could be as disastrous for Malcolm Fraser as Ethiopia's was for Haile Selassie. Although the "Lion of Australia" is unlikely to exit in such spectacular style as his Ethiopian counterpart, the failure of the 1982 Budget will deal the Libs a bitter blow at the polls. They can and will lay the blame for their budget blowout on massive drought relief funds, which could reach $400 million by the end of the year. The fact that drought relief was not entertained in the August budget was a clear indication of where most government heads were at the time — very deeply embedded in the sand. As a result, many farmers and graziers who have traditionally voted Liberal (not many vote NCP) are gingerly feeling around for Labor and Democrat options — especially in the electorates of Hume, Eden-Monaro and Macarthur.

This is not hard to understand when government ministers have shown such obvious apathy toward the drought. On September 12, when asked why the drought aid package was so late in coming, Federal Minister for Primary Industry Peter Nixon declared: "If we'd known at budget time that the drought was going to continue right through to September, we'd have made our judgments earlier." The fact that the drought was well into its second year was of little concern to the government. They were banking on September rains. As a long-range weather forecaster, the government was as disappointing as it was at handling money.

But drought aid packages are not only unpopular with failing Federal govern-

MAJOR DROUGHTS IN AUSTRALIA

Australia has suffered nine major widespread droughts since the keeping of rainfall records began:

1864-66 All States were affected except Tasmania.

1880-86 Southern and eastern mainland States were affected.

1888 All States were hit except Western Australia.

1895–1903 This drought, one of the worst on record, halved Australia's sheep population (originally 100 million) and cut cattle numbers (12 million) by 40 percent.

1911-16 1916 Wheat crops were affected in most States, sheep numbers declined by 19 million and cattle by 2 million.

1918-20 During this period parts of Western Australia were the only areas completely free from drought.

1939-45 This prolonged drought affected crops and/or pastoral areas in all States. Sheep numbers fell from 125 million in 1942 to 96 million in 1945.

1965-67 This drought, in its impact on Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, ranked with the 1902 drought as one of the most severe on record. It resulted in a 40 percent drop in the wheat harvest, a loss of 20 million. There was a chain reaction to other industries, with heavy losses being suffered by manufacturers of farm machinery, and the NSW Railways. Effects of the drought were worsened by water rationing in irrigation areas.

1972 Widespread drought occurred throughout Australia.

ments. Henry Nix, an agronomist with the CSIRO in Canberra, sees drought aid as decidely ill-directed. He comments: "In any drought-declared area you can compare properties and see vast differences in the condition of the land. Farmers who overstock and generally mismanage their land usually end up getting the most drought aid, and in effect goverments encourage this mismanagement. But economic policies and high interest rates can be to blame as well. If a farmer has taken out a loan to grow a crop of wheat or restock his property, at around 20 percent, he has to flog the country to get on top. We all want cheap food and fibre, so in a sense the blame has to be spread around. But basically a lot of drought relief is counterproductive in the long run because it supports and prolongs bad management. It would be far better to use the money to educate landholders in fodder conservation and water storage in good times, rather than dole it out in bad times."

But farmers are not the only ones at the mercy of the Red Landlord. All those who service the rural sector are equally praying for rain. The NSW railways traditionally make their only profits from transporting wheat and coal. The 1982-83 NSW wheat crop will be down by one-third, which will rob the railways of $100 million. Regional transport industries will miss out on a further $40 million.

The Bureau of Agricultural Economics estimates that for every one-dollar fall in agricultural production, a two to three-dollar loss occurs in the economy of regional centres. Unemployment in the agricultural sector now stands at 17,000 and increased by 4000 in July alone. General stores, stock and station agents and car dealers in drought-affected areas are all suffering. Over the past two years, sales of fertiliser have dropped by up to 95 percent in many areas. Traditionally, rural small businesses operate on small margins and a drop of even 25 percent in revenue generally signals the end.

Some industries, such as water carriers, stock transporters and fodder producers, do benefit from droughts. Water for cattle and horses is not just a matter of a bucket or two a day. Their generally accepted ratio is 50 to 60 litres a day, although sheep are generally content on five litres. But in a prolonged drought such as the present one, there is no fodder left to transport except from Western Australia, where some early spring rains did fall. Little hay was made last spring because the dry weather had already begun. The year before that, the lucerne crops were decimated by aphids. What little lucerne hay remains now sells for around $8 a bale — a 100 percent increase on normal prices.

Part of this increase is due to unscrupulous growers and more especially hay carters, who have been tacking on 25 percent to their prices in lieu of the government's 25 percent subsidy on fodder. For struggling farmers who have suffered huge losses on other crops, some may recoup a little of their lost ground by doing this and not incur too much wrath. But greedy hay carters, who make a killing at these times anyway, have scooped the pool at the expense of battling farmers this year.

All in all, it's pretty gloomy. But largely due to the visual impact of this drought on TV, many are asking about ways to insure against droughts. Are they necessary with improved technology and water management? Or are they so powerful and all-consuming that we just have to wear them?

In many ways Australia leads the world in the management of arid climates. Our hydrologists are among the best in the world and are frequently contracted out to other marginal farming countries. The Australian method of "drought watch", developed by D.M. Lee, is now used exclusively by the government of Botswana.

Rainmaking, by seeding promising cloud formations with silver iodide smoke, was once hailed as a major breakthrough in drought control. Australia has led the world in this research after rain was produced by cloud seeding near Bathurst, NSW, in 1947. But the CSIRO Division of Cloud Physics has recently had to tell farmers that there are no guarantees with this technique and unless five years of research is devoted to a specific area, it is impossible to predict the impact of the technique. At present the many variables such as cloud type, air temperature, ground terrain and finance combine to make cloud seeding a hit-and-miss affair.

Australia has less "moving" water than other great land masses. It has been estimated that Sydney Harbor holds 400,000 acre feet of water. (An acre foot is the amount of water contained in one acre covered to a depth of one foot.) The Murray River at Albury has an annual discharge of four million acre feet. But compare this with the Ganges River in India, which annually discharges 615 million acre feet, and the Amazon River with a massive 2970 million, and it is easy to see that our rivers are more sensitive to environmental pressures. If it were possible to drain Sydney Harbor, the Ganges would fill it in just under six hours. The Amazon would do it in the time it takes to walk over the bridge and back. All the rivers in Australia combined would take over 15 hours. So even if it were financially possible to irrigate all the inland areas of Australia, we simply don't have enough water in our rivers to do it.

Droughts, lack of major rivers and huge evaporation rates make irrigation difficult but essential. Half the storage of most of our major dams is lost to evaporation every five years. Up to 90 percent of water issuing from bores around the country is lost in the same way. And whenever it rains, 90 percent of that rainwater is evaporated off the ground or taken up by plants and transpired. That leaves us with only 10 percent of our total rainfall to move about and store — a percentage way below that of most other countries.

The importance of planning for droughts using stored water becomes obvious when we look at the huge amounts of water that are needed to produce food and clothing. The classic example is that one tonne of water is required to produce one egg. That is, the water needed to grow the grass and grain which the hen eats to get to maturity to lay the egg, plus all the water it would drink as well, is equal to one tonne. Other estimates include: half a tonne for an orange, two and a half tonnes for a loaf of bread and 550 tonnes for a kilo of wool. Industrially, 300,000 litres of water are needed to produce one tonne of steel.

Irrigated land is one of our most

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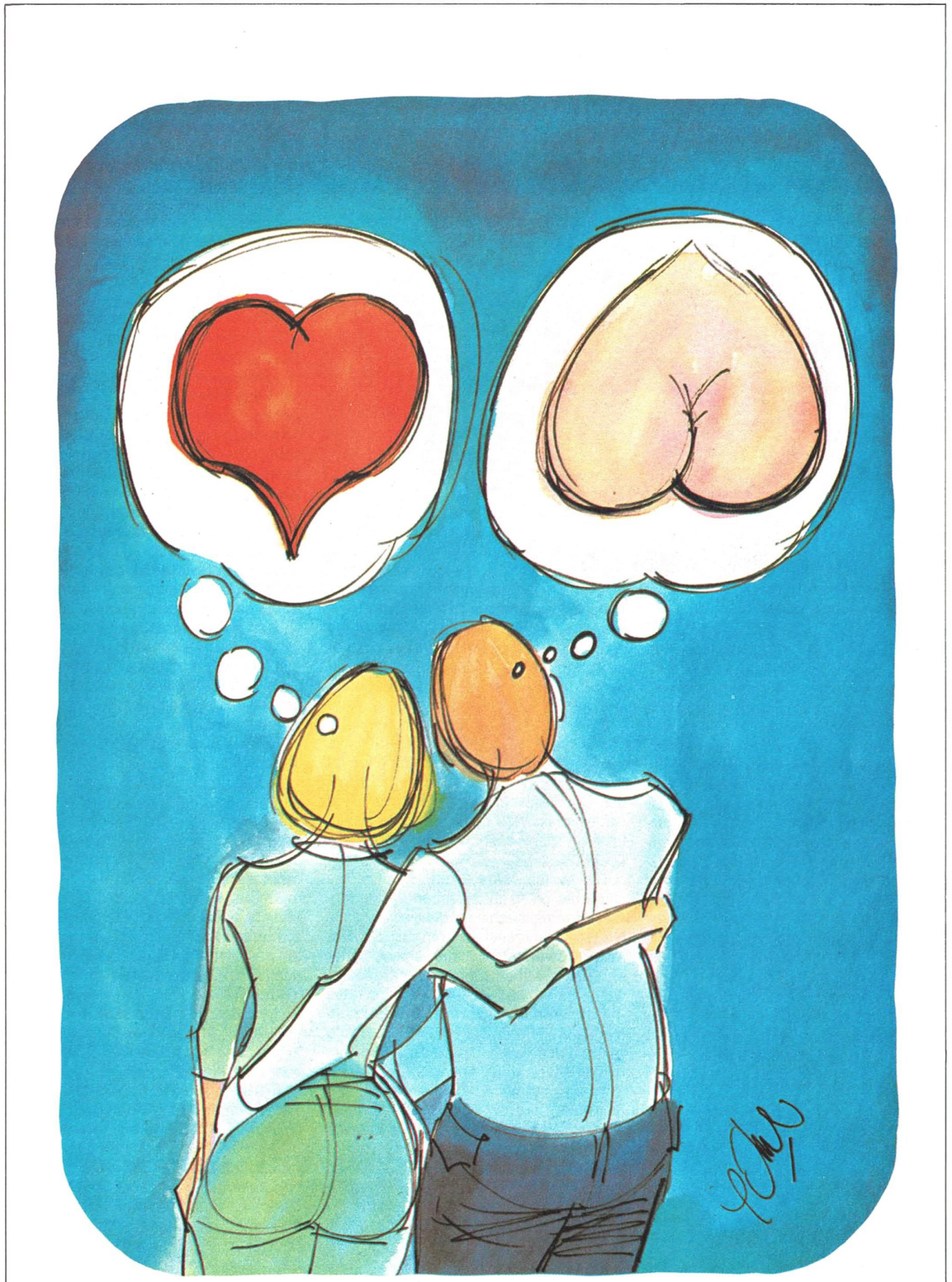
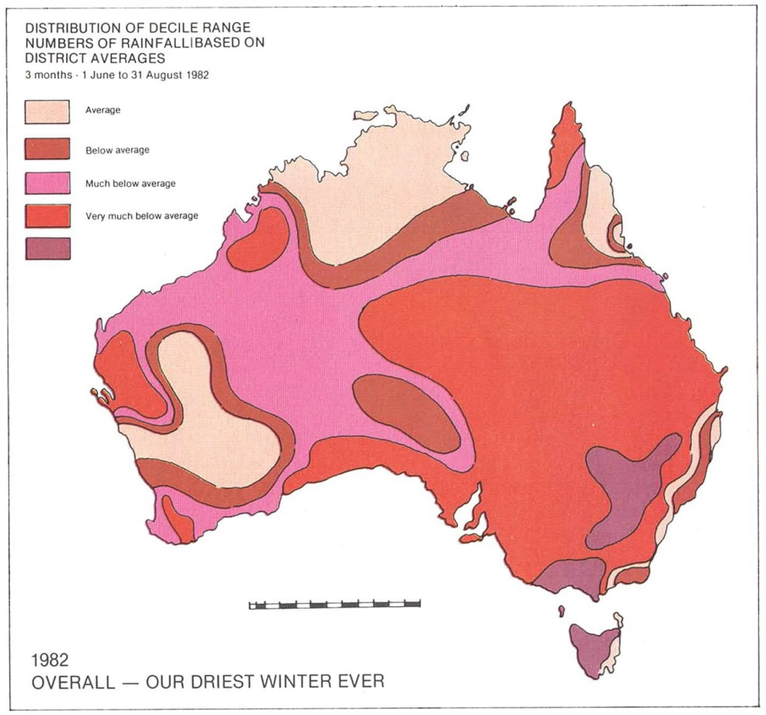




1982
OVERALL — OUR DRIEST WINTER EVER

Continued from page 86

precious commodities. Under 10 percent of our arable land is irrigated, and yet it produces a quarter of our agricultural production. Half the food we buy is grown under irrigation conditions. One of the main reasons city dwellers tend not to experience droughts is that most of their milk, fruit and vegetables comes from irrigated land and is thus assured through all but the severest droughts. Without the enterprise of the pioneers of the early 1900s in preparing Australia's large irrigation schemes, the 1982 drought may well have ushered in the use of meal tickets and food queues in eastern cities. Indeed, if the drought continues for another couple of years, that distant prospect could become a grim reality.

At present, wheat reserves are sufficient to supply the domestic market for 1983, but a dry summer this year followed by a repetition of this year's winter cycle would have a devastating effect in 1984. If we were to fill any export orders at all, there would be no wheat for domestic consumption. Bread would become a luxury item and many of the "fast" and processed food industries that rely on bulk flour would have to buy expensive imported flour.

Already this year the drought has had an appreciable effect on fruit and vegetable production. Many dairy farmers in NSW are having trouble meeting their quotas and in the Hunter Valley problems with soil salinity have occurred as the water table drops. Water rationing has been introduced in many areas as rivers dry up (sometimes up to five kilometres a day, as with rivers like the Darling). At the end of the current winter most of the major dams in NSW were down by at least 50 percent of their normal capacity. Some, like the Copeton Dam in the north, were down to 14 percent, while the Hume in the south was down to 26 percent. But while farmers were being asked to function on as little as 15 percent of their normal irrigation supplies, mining and industry in the same areas were under no such restrictions. In many cases, neither were town users.

But by the same token, many of the problems being experienced with irrigation systems, such as soil salinity and rising water tables, stem from the fact that many growers attach little value to water and use far too much. Generally, town water more than pays for itself in the rates that are levied, as does industry. But country water is very cheap and if a more realistic price were attached to it, growers might use it with a little more reverence.

Decreased water supplies are not the only effect of drought on perishable crops. The large high pressure cells which stop rain from falling can also give rise to below-average temperatures over inland Australia. This year's winter has been particularly cold as well as dry, and many crops suffered from savage frosts. South Australian oranges and mandarins were bitter and below average this year as a result of heavy and late frost.

Potatoes could rise in price this summer by up to 80 percent. Victorian potatoes, which usually come into season at the beginning of the year, may not eventuate. Frosts in June and July in Queensland have sent the price of tomatoes to three and four times their usual level, while onions are also expensive this year because of irrigation restrictions around Griffith in NSW. If the drought extends into 1983, and especially in north Queensland, the whole of the east coast will be dramatically affected by a hike in vegetable prices.

But while farmers cry poor and shake their fists at the malevolent rain god, there is increasing evidence that, on a global scale, farmers may well take the blame themselves for their current plight. A paper published not long after the great drought in the African Sahel region showed how over-clearing and over-grazing had changed the "albedo", or reflectance of the earth's surface. One of the most important factors in the energy balance of the globe is the reflecting property of the ground's surface. Water absorbs solar radiation very effectively and therefore has a low reflectance. Ice, on the other hand, has a very high one. Cultivated or bare soil has a considerably lower reflectance than green vegetation, so when large tracts of the land's surface are stripped of forest cover the earth starts to heat up, causing the surrounding air to become hotter than usual. These "hot spots" can greatly alter normal rainfall patterns. Australia has had nearly two-thirds of its forest removed since Captain Cook and his party first started building houses and making fires. So if this theory is borne out in times to come, Australians would do well to embark on a national reaforestation program.

In another interesting observation on one of the world's most crucial marginal areas, American climatologist Reid S. Bryson has shown how the large desert around the Indus River in north-west India owes its legacy of droughts to the folly of man. Dust in the air, he claims — sometimes over five tonnes per square mile — stops the moist airstreams that waft over the desert from falling as rain. The dust is due to the fact that man and animals have denuded most of the natural vegetation. And yet pollen records show that a great civilisation, resting amid plush vegetation and rich soils, existed there some 2500 years BC.

A NSW aboriginal tribal elder, Guboo Ted Thomas, has been campaigning strongly in recent years for an end to logging of the State's natural forests for precisely these reasons. In reply to a recent comment on changes in the natural cycles, he said: "You must notice how the seasons are different now. The rain doesn't come at the right time and the fish don't travel in the right season like they did years ago. Many of the natural cycles have changed so much since I was a boy. It's all because there are no trees left. Unless we start planting back the trees, I can see many years of drought ahead."

Perhaps one of the best drought indicators we have lies halfway between Canberra and Goulburn on the NSW Southern Tablelands. Lake George is a vast expanse of water measuring some 15 kms by 10 kms. Traditionally it reflects a long-term assessment of climate by drying out to varying degrees and refilling again. It emptied completely around the 1930s and started to fill again just after the war years — in keeping with the generally dry period before the war and the wetter post-war years. For the past three or four years the lake has been steadily draining again, and is now completely empty.

Droughts being what they are — natural features of Australia's climate — they do serve some useful purposes. The rapid reduction in stock numbers in droughts and their relatively slow build-up after rain can relieve over-stocked and over-grazed areas enormously. In areas where cattle ticks are a problem, droughts usually lower tick populations considerably. Foot rot, flies and worms are generally no problem during and immediately after droughts. In fact, if stock can be assured of water and feed, drought years tend to make animals healthier.

Native animals (and to a degree, farm animals) all tend to stop breeding in periods of very dry weather as a natural response to diminished food and water. The creation of many artificial watering points in this country over the years has helped many native animals through droughts which would otherwise have caused them to perish. Natural foods are around after seasons of dry weather, but water disappears quickly.

Australian soils are among the oldest in the world, and therefore considerable "leaching" has occurred over the years. This tends to make them relatively infertile. The action of droughts on soils *per se* is not so great. The damage comes when the native grasses and shrubs, which are largely drought-resistant, are grazed and trampled by hard-hooved cattle and sheep. Once the ground cover is lost, then the drying action of droughts becomes a problem because large amounts of topsoil are removed either by wind or by floods when the drought breaks. Without topsoil the native flora cannot regenerate properly and deserts begin to creep.

It has been estimated that a really large dust storm in Australia carries about 11 million tonnes of soil — enough to top-dress 70,000 acres of land to a depth of 2.5 cms. Much of the topsoil in dust storms over central Australia is deposited in the snowfields of the Southern Alps and even as far away as New Zealand, where large amounts of Australian soil are contained in their glaciers. Up to 1000 kgs/hectare of dust from the centre ends up in our Snowy region from each storm. The very large dust storms only originate in times of drought, so the more droughts we will have the more rapid and complete this "fertility transfer" will be.

Given that droughts are a natural feature of the Australian landscape, we still cannot predict them. With upwards of a dozen possible man-made and environmental factors contributing in all sorts of combinations, we still have a long way to go in understanding the causes of dry weather.

Undoubtedly the simplest explanation we have comes from the old Indian sage Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, who recently told Australians that the current drought was "indicative of a dryness in the hearts of the people." Maybe it's not the most scientific explanation, but given the tangible link between human actions and climate observed so far, it may be a pointer in the right direction. Indeed, we know most of what there is to know about the weather patterns and the functions of drought. What we don't know is; why? And that answer may be as deeply embedded in human consciousness as it is in the polar ice caps and westerly winds.

THE COCKIES' LAMENT

Richard Warren is a typical drought-affected farmer. His 1400-acre property, "High Pale", usually provides a verdant backdrop to the rich undulations of the NSW town of Oberon and neighboring Jenolan Caves. Says Warren: "I usually get 36 inches of rain a year. So far this year I've had nine and a half. But," he adds, "drought not only means having to cope with the financial hardship; there is also the heartbreak of seeing the sheep and cattle dwindle away. At one stage I could send them to other districts or interstate, but now it's so widespread the only option is to sell them off at rock bottom prices or shoot them if they're too weak to move. As farmers we all know that we are at the mercy of the elements, but a four-year drought and depressed prices are more than anyone could be expected to cope with. It's going to take me more than a decade to be able to meet my commitments again."

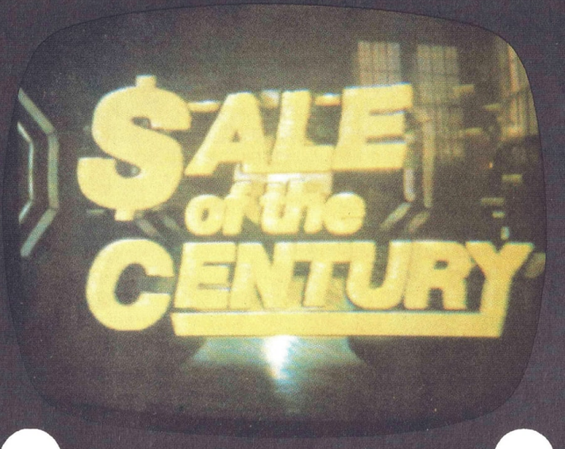
"Bobingah" is a large and usually prosperous sheep and cattle farm near Nimmittabel in the drought-devastated southern Monaro region. Peter Taylor, owner and manager, usually runs 18,000 sheep and 2000 head of cattle. "This year," he says, "I've sent most of my cattle to Queensland and with my last year's agistment bill at $100,000, it's not hard to see why one farmer is leaving the land every three hours now." The Monaro region of NSW has been continually drought-declared for the last four years.

John and Theresa Rorke own a large irrigated property near Deniliquin in the southern Riverina area of NSW — usually flush with water, and the envy of many farmers. This year it is almost as bad as the drier areas to the north and the west, due to drastic irrigation cuts. Even so, a Southern Riverina District Irrigation Committee meeting recently decided not to go for a big media campaign to attract better subsidies in the drought, because they do get a little water from irrigation and in Theresa's words, "Other farmers who have no water at all may have been irritated by our actions, so we decided against it. But," she continues, "a lot of us have had to forego our acreage of rice, in order to water a crop that will at least give us some cash flow. The men have to go out and hand-feed the sheep twice a day now, so we never see them. They're gone from daylight till dark and it puts a great strain on family life. You get very tired, frustrated and cranky.

"Last week John had to shoot 200 sheep who were too old and too weak to go anywhere. He got together with my eldest son and a friend, dug a large pit up the back, put silencers on the guns and that was it. I told them I'd have to go to town for the day — I couldn't bear that. But there was nothing else they could do. You can't let them die of thirst or starve in the paddocks. At least they were fed something every day until they died."

Michael Yabsley, public relations officer with the Livestock and Grain Producers Association, probably has more personal contact with the drought than anybody. "You can see the drought etched on our members' faces," he says. "After successive crop failures and a negative cash flow in many cases for four years, morale for primary producers tends to be flattened. However, what many have lost in income and morale, they tend to make up for in sheer determination — the determination to stick it out. Working on the land is more than just a source of income, it's a way of life.

"City dwellers now seem to understand that it is not only the farmers' drought, but Australia's drought. With primary production still accounting for 45 percent of our export income, the national flock and herd simply has to be preserved."



HIGH ON MONEY

Hope and avarice spring eternal in TV quizland

BY GREG HUNTER

"This is our carry-over champion Stan Murray — a part-time schoolteacher, former professional athlete and collector of barbed wire. Stand by to see him play for a self-propelled lawnmower valued at three *thousand* four hundred and sixty-one dollars — one of the incredible bargains on *Sale of the Century* . . ."

There doesn't seem to be one chance in a million of holding my act together. Not this time . . . I've gone too far. My brain will refuse to absorb these bizarre stimuli and deal with them appropriately . . . and the result can only be disaster. But there's no back door, it's all happening, and the only way out now is to burst through the star-spangled double doors before the cue and stride all the way across the studio floor to where Tony Barber is standing, and then to put my hand on his shoulder and say, "Look, Tone . . . I'm just a bit too . . . *ripped* . . . to do this thing right now . . . I know you've got a replacement out there, and I'm really sorry about this, but at the moment I'm a little too . . . *fucked up* . . ." And I'm thinking very seriously about doing exactly that, because right now, as I'm standing on the spot marked "X" behind this thin partition, my left ear is trying to cope with Stan Murray babbling some inane gibberish about his favorite piece of barbed wire, which is called the Hart-McGlen Star and is worth over $500, although there are some bits of star-shaped barbed wire that are only worth two dollars, while my co-challenger — who looks to have been hand-picked for this encounter, radiating the consummate niceness of a benign kindergarten teacher — is beaming in on the other ear ("I think it's so lovely . . . marvellous . . . wonderful . . . I've been here once before but I didn't get to go on because I was one of the reserves but they still put me up at this lovely hotel and flew me over from Western Australia and I'd never seen Melbourne before so I think it's just marvellous the way they treat you . . ."), and in the midst of this torrent of confusion the only thing that's really coming through loud and clear is the sound of the blood gushing furiously around inside my skull, spurred on by a massive concentration of exotic chemicals . . . it sounds like a thunderous ocean in here, and my pulse reading tells me I don't have a pulse but more of a continous *Brrrrrrrrrrraaaapppp* which is just getting faster and faster, until by the time Victoria Nicholls says: "Our first contestant tonight is a housewife who enjoys gardening, and our second contestant is a writer who likes surfing", it feels like my head is going to go "pop" — clean off my shoulders — as if Clint Eastwood had just blasted it from point-blank range with his .44 Magnum . . .

About one year prior to this shameful episode, I had succumbed to the urge (which I'm convinced is present in everyone) to make a fool of myself on national television. I'd done it everywhere else, so why not? It seemed like the last frontier. I needed some quick megabucks, and I figured *Sale Of The Century* was my best chance of getting them. Of course there were other options, but they were fraught with difficulties. There was no way, for instance, that I could possibly guess the price of a hand-carved ebony toilet seat or cope with a frenzied mob of assorted ethnic grandmothers squeezing me to death and stomping all over me if I did happen to get it right. *The Price Is Right* was clearly not on. Nor could I have stacked myself up against genuinely intelligent people who had time to think, as they do on *Ford Superquiz* and *Mastermind.* And I never could work out what was actually happening on *Family Feud,* although I had my suspicions. What I needed was a true sporting contest like *Sale Of The Century* — one requiring fast reflexes and plenty of sheer guts and determination. I was young, fit, and free of physical disabilities. With the right drug selection — a vital factor in all sporting events — I'd be a chance.

And in any case, *Sale Of The Century* appeared to offer some chance of preserving a modicum of dignity, unlike its downmarket competitors, which are apparently moving in the grotesque direction pioneered by the Americans in their version of *The Price Is Right.* On that show, the studio audience all arrive in the most outlandish animal costumes they can get hold of in order to attract the attention of the MC. As he fights his way up the aisle, this agitated conglomeration of assorted wildlife are falling all over each other to get at him, each quite prepared to bite, kick, strangle or scare out of him an invitation to "Come On Down". Australian audiences have not yet had to cope with the sight of a disgruntled baboon telling a disappointed elephant that the pair of them had been ripped off. Just as well.

I wrote off my application to the Grundy Organisation. They made me wait almost a year before informing me that a State-wide recruitment drive would be held at Lane Cove Town Hall.

Taking my place among one thousand faces from the core of Middle Australia,

HIGH ON MONEY

I'm feeling very uncomfortable about the whole thing. I want to start telling everybody that I'm just here for a bit of a laugh, and really I think *Sale Of The Century* is a very demeaning and tacky affair and I'm not a money-grabbing capitalist . . . But there's no place for that sort of talk here. Not in this oppressive atmosphere of grim determination. And why shouldn't they be *absolutely serious* about this thing: after all, there's a recession going on out there, while inside the bright lights of this gigantic meeting place there's bucks up for grabs, and who cares what the fuck you have to do to get a shot at them? Sing a song, stand on your head, stick your fingers down your throat and vomit at a designated target . . . who cares, as long as you're a winner? Now the producer is handing out forms to fill in, and there's a space on them where everyone has to write a funny story. They're all scribbling away like crazy — inspiration flowing like coins out of a poker machine — and now they're putting up their hands for more paper, because they haven't got the punchline down yet and they don't want to have to write it on the back because the Personality Assessors might miss it . . .

This is a place for old people. A place where you can cash in on all the trivial details you've picked up over the long haul. They know it, too — sitting here with their jaws set in eager anticipation, like a vast herd of old bull elephants who've finally found the waterhole . . . but first they've got to get over this last hurdle, so it's probably best to laugh nervously at everything the producer up on stage says, because even now the Personality Assessors could be watching for signs of cynical detachment . . .

Now there's trouble. I've just had my answer sheet marked by the granny on my left and I've passed the quiz with nothing to spare, but I've had to give her a failure and the sour old rhino has got it in for me . . . she wants to take me out with her, and now she's found out that she's mistakenly marked one of my answers correct. So she waits till I'm off guard, then snakes out that horrible flabby old right arm and snatches the sheet away . . . I've got to stop this criminal sabotage, but can I risk thumping her over the head with my plastic clipboard, not just once but maybe four or five times until she drops the paper, right here in the front row with the producer and his assessors staring grimly out at me, only 10 feet away?

No. They're not equipped to handle that sort of ugliness. Better to just sit here and wait for a miracle . . . which comes in the form of a special concession from the producer: "All right then, we'll accept 24 plus a query." I steal a sideways glance: the enemy's mouth is locked into a horribly contorted sort of grin — probably something like the way it looked on her wedding night when old Clem first started rummaging around inside her underpants with those filthy fingers of his . . .

Once you're in, the real panic begins. With just two days to go before I'll be winging my way down to the Melbourne studios of GTV Nine, I need to get hold of the right chemical — something that will give me a definite edge, a substance capable of flicking my stimulus-response mechanism into ultrasensitivity without reducing my brain to a smouldering junkpile of twisted neurones. I know exactly where to find it . . .

At Tullamarine, a chauffeur-driven Rolls is waiting for myself and two other contestants. The war of nerves is on from the moment we get off the plane. This skinny nervous-looking woman in a polka-dotted dress can't find her luggage. She's got to have that suitcase, because in it are the three changes of clothes she'll need if she

My knowledge of history has been culled entirely from *A Short History of the World,* in which Adolf Hitler capitulates on page 43

becomes the champ. They tape the whole week's episodes in one day, and there could be any number of ratbag housewives out there who'll notice she's been wearing the same dress right through from Monday to Friday night. They'll start jamming the switchboard with complaints — "That filthy old woman must stink like a sewer by now" — so if she can't find it, maybe they won't let her be champ. But the fat man in the conservative suit doesn't want to know about it: "Forget the lousy suitcase. You won't win anyway." But she's already back there pacing round and round the empty conveyor belt, like the last surviving adherent to some pathetic cargo cult. "Look, this woman is a fucking *lunatic,*" says the fat man to the chauffeur. "The fucking luggage belt isn't even *moving,* for Chrissake. I've got to make it to the studio in 15 minutes, otherwise I mightn't get *on.*" But the chauffeur's assignment is to pick up *three* people, not two. "If you won't take me there, I'll drive the fucking car myself! Give me the keys . . ." Another ugly little set-to . . . as I leave to hail a cab, the chauffeur has this guy in a savage headlock; the saliva is running out of the fat man's mouth and trickling all the way down his new Sax Altman suit, while the skinny woman in the polka-dotted dress wanders over to find out what all the fuss is about . . .

A little show-biz dressing room with a great big mirror surrounded by bright light bulbs: perfect. Stan Murray, the white-haired old eccentric and carry-over champion, has got all six of us fazed from the word go. The man is a master of trivia. He's sitting in the red corner in his blue safari suit, fervently reciting lines from *Oklahoma* — in which he is soon to appear — but now he's changed tack and is simultaneously posing and answering questions about the First Fleet, while the challenger in the blue corner — a Billy Bunter look-alike with an idiotic pink and yellow striped bow tie — is babbling about some obscure Flemish composer while reading *The Odyssey* from the original Greek . . . but now he announces that he has to slip out for an hour or so to speak in an intervarsity debate, so the running gets taken up by a worried young chap wearing horn-rimmed spectacles who's trying to find out the answers — right now before the show starts — to all those little questions about Kings and Queens of England that have plagued him since primary school . . . just on the off-chance they might crop up . . . and now Stan (the perfect sportsman) is drawing us a diagram of The Buzzer on this little blackboard ("I'm not an artist, mind you, but if you'll just bear with me for one moment I think I can produce a reasonably accurate facsimile here") . . . Shit! What kind of a circus is this? No time to worry about that. The coach has arrived to give us our instructions: "Now all of you must realise that *thousands* of people passed that quiz we gave you. The reason you're here is that you all have *great personalities.* So for God's sake, be *bright,* be *bubbly* . . . we want you to have *fun* out there . . . and please, if you win a prize, smile like crazy or the sponsors will get very upset . . . now I want you to go out there and *enjoy yourselves* . . ."

"Don't eat before the game. You might throw up." Stan holding court in the canteen just prior to airtime, laying bare the secrets of quiz maestros the world over.The trick, according to Stan, is to be absolutely *wired* — to writhe on the knife-edge of paranoid psychosis, every nerve fibre screaming in anguish, bowels reverberating almost to the point of incontinence . . . a quiz king must function on a potent mixture of adrenalin and *fear* . . . "I know what fear means," he says solemnly. "If I lose today, my wife is going to kill me. And now, if you gentlemen will excuse me, I'd like to be alone in the dressing room. I want to commune with myself."

I've got no particular reason to feel confident. My knowledge of history has recently been culled entirely from the pages of *A Short History Of The World,* in which Adolf Hitler capitulates on page 43. There are yawning gaps there. Besides that, I know nothing of flowers, wedding anniversaries and former girlfriends of Prince Charles. But I do have in my wallet a substance which is capable of cranking up my nervous system to fever pitch and beyond. However, timing is going to be critical. Eventually I corner the coach and find out that she's throwing me in first up — Monday night in real time — so I retire to the dressing room and wait for the call. When the time comes, I slip quietly into the toilet and open up my stash. With the words of Stan Murray uppermost in my mind, I decide to devour the lot.

"All right, we're going to have a fantastic time. Big smiles all the way." The producer gearing us up for the performance of our lives. But in my case there's no need: they'd have trouble shifting this smile from my face with a sledgehammer . . . the only problem is that I don't seem to have much control over it *myself* . . .

And so the housewife and I are waiting behind the doors for the big entrance. I've realised now that there's no way out of this shameful mess . . . I just want to go out there and meet the catastrophe head-on . . . so what if they drag me kicking and screaming out of my stool at the first commercial break and replace me with the producer's cousin? . . . "Our first contestant tonight is a housewife who enjoys gardening and our second contestant is a writer who likes surfing" . . . and nothing happens! The star-spangled double doors haven't moved an inch — and I'm so fired up I'm ready to kick the fuckers down so we can get on with this insane gig . . .

Technical problems: 10-minute break. I stagger out into the studio and sit down next to Stan, who's still gripping his buzzer and staring trance-like at the ceiling . . . he hasn't let go of that buzzer for 20 minutes now, and his hand is shaking so badly he has to hold it still with the other one . . . Jesus, the man is in *worse shape than I am.* This high-voltage adrenalin trip must be taking years off his life . . . it could even be *fatal* . . .

All right, here we go again. The door opens this time, and we swing through and take our stools. Tony winds up his chat with housewife Norma ("lovely, Tony, absolutely marvellous, wonderful") and now it's my turn. I'm assuming at this point that someone's told him I work for *Penthouse* magazine, and this being a family affair, I'm expecting him to avoid the issue entirely. The drug has taken over completely now, and the last thing I want to get into is some kind of heavy moral confrontation on national television . . . in fact, I don't want the cameras on me at all, because there's a vein in my neck that's throbbing so violently it's about to leap right out of my collar and rear up, screaming, on its tail . . . while my eyes are so wide open I have to pull the lids down manually, and my mouth is now completely out of control . . . I think I've got a sort of smile on my face, but the TV cameras will later establish that only one side of my face is working . . .

"And who do you write for, Greg?"

"Err . . . *Penthouse* magazine."

Barber's jaw sags visibly. "Err . . . they're into Real Estate, aren't they . . ."

"Yup."

"Tell me, Greg . . . do you write the . . . err . . . the err . . ."

("Yes, Tony, as a matter of fact I do write all those filthy depraved Forum letters . . . I've got this little office downstairs where they've set up continuous blue movies, just to get me in the mood, and I sit there with one hand on my slug and the other on the typewriter keys, and I crank out those stinking letters all day long . . ." Great moments in Australian television . . .)

"Well a lot of people ask me that question as a matter of fact Tony but actually I'm not involved in that sort of thing at all

Will we go out together in a blaze of frazzled nerve endings, like a pair of elephantine rainbow catherine wheels?

and I don't carry samples and I'm really quite a decent sort of person really . . ." Jesus! I'm talking at a *million miles an hour* . . . I've got to *slow down* . . . maybe they can cut all that crap out . . . give me another chance . . . (They did — *Ed.*)

Right. Now we're into the First Round, and I'm powering . . . this chemical is *magic* . . . Gift Shop time rolls around and Stan and I are even on 35 points, while Norma hasn't opened her mouth yet. Either of us can buy the first prize and they've wheeled out one of those ridiculous sets . . . but what the hell is it? I can see Victoria dressed in what looks like an outfit borrowed from Ronald McDonald, and Tony's raving about watts and volts and so on, but it's all too far away . . . *"Boing."* Stan has taken it — an $800 car cassette for six dollars . . . Jesus wept.

At the end of the first round I'm 10 points clear, and Stan is starting to shake so violently it looks like he's sitting on top of a live hand grenade. Now we're into the Who Am I question, and I've got it! Woodpecker! But who are all these faces on that board? There's only one up there that I recognise, so I go for George Negus . . . and it's a prize of some sort, but what? My vision has narrowed to about five feet now and I'm trying to smile like the coach said — but it feels *all wrong* . . .

Ready for the Second Round, but there's another technical problem — Stan's lights have gone out. A half-hour break this time, so Stan and I slip out to the canteen for coffee. I've really shaken this poor man up; he's trying to hang on to that cup but the coffee is spilling out all over his snappy new safari suit, and I'm not much better, for that matter. Who'll crack first? Or will we go out together in a blaze of frazzled nerve endings, like a pair of elephantine rainbow catherine wheels?

What sort of sickness has led this massive audience into the studio to watch over this decadent sport? To applaud themselves, to applaud inanimate objects, to applaud the rapid progress of a fly on the wall or the rampant rapacious greed of the human species? Or did somebody just pay them to do it? Are they, in fact, professional clappers?

The crack-up comes right at the start of the Second Round. Question: "At what famous battle did the American pioneer Davy Crocket die? — Yes Greg?"

"I . . . *don't know* . . . ha ha ha ha ha!" That's it . . . it's all downhill from here on in. By the end of the round I've given another five idiot responses and the housewife is still struck mute, presumably by the incredible loveliness of it all. Stan is cruising now. I make a last-ditch charge right at the death, but I'm foiled by a crucial question: "What is a five-letter word meaning 'open sore' which is also an anagram of . . ." I leap in to answer with "wound" but Stan has come in right over the top and yelled out "ulcer" — without being asked. This is the most heinous crime a contestant can commit on *Sale Of The Century.*

"Greg", says Tony solemnly, "the answer Stan just gave is correct. What were you going to say?"

"I was going to say 'wound', Tony."

"Are you sure, Greg? If you'd answered 'ulcer' you'd have been right . . ."

"Yup. But I wasn't going to say 'ulcer' . . ."

"Then I'll have to count that as a wrong answer and subtract five points from your score . . ."

What the fuck have I done? What sort of idiot morality am I functioning under? Is it possible that throughout this whole bizarre episode I was looking for nothing more than the chance to be noble on national television? Barber is flabbergasted: "What about that, folks! Let's have a big hand for Greg! Can you believe that?" The applause is deafening, and they've moved in the mobile floor camera to get a close-up shot of a noble face . . . but what they get instead is a face that's extremely . . . *confused* . . .

Stan is home and hosed now. He wins

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AUSTRALIA

Strike me lucky!

TREASURE ISLAND

BY GEOFFREY E. SMITH

Buried Treasure! *Words which stir the blood and fire the imagination. Yet for most Australians they conjure up images of faraway places: fabled lost cities like El Dorado (the City of Gold), still to be discovered in some steaming South American jungle; or pirate booty buried beneath the white sand and palm trees of an island in the Caribbean; or a sunken galleon wrecked four centuries ago while sailing home from the Spanish Main. But there are lost treasures in Australia — any number of them, in fact. Treasure ships lie off the*

ILLUSTRATION BY DONNA CROSS

TREASURE ISLAND

coast of Western Australia, and are rotting away in the coral around the islands of Torres Strait. Ben Hall, the notorious outlaw, left a whole stack of gold and jewels hidden somewhere between Orange, Forbes and Yass in central-western NSW. Then there are a whole series of lost and legendary gold reefs in Australia just waiting to be rediscovered: for example, Lasseter's Reef, Dead Man's Reef in far North Queensland, and Lindo's Lost Reef in the Monaro district of NSW. A Swedish carpenter on the SS Avoca *made off with 5000 gold sovereigns from the ship's bullion room when she docked in Melbourne in August 1877. The thief was apprehended, tried and convicted, but not before he had hidden the gold, which is supposed to lie somewhere near the Tarwin River in Victoria. In a cave on Moa Island in Torres Strait is a legendary idol in the form of a dog six metres long, constructed of rare tortoise shells; today it would be worth a fortune. And on nearby Stephens Island lies a king's ransom in jewels. About 240kms south of Darwin there are 800 ounces of gold worth more than $250,000, lost when a pack horse carrying the nuggets bolted into the night and was never seen again. All 20 "treasure trove" stories related in this article are unresolved mysteries.*

1. Captain Roe's Treasure

Boot Reef lies about 225kms north-east of the tip of Cape York. There, in 1890, Captain Samuel J. Roe, the skipper of one of Frank Jardine's luggers, found a mass of gold and silver Spanish dollars embedded in coral. They were worth many thousands of pounds. The Jardine dollars were real, and this has remained one of the most valuable treasures found in Australia.

Jardine's fleet was out fishing for beche-de-mer when a cyclone blew up. Roe took his lugger to the safety of a small cove situated on the tip of Boot Reef, just outside the Great Barrier Reef. When the cyclone passed, Roe found that the tide had fallen so far since they had entered the cove that they were completely encircled by a coral reef. Native divers were sent over the side of the lugger and began smashing a channel through the coral. Suddenly one shouted out in excitement; he had driven his crowbar into the coral and, when it split open, he had uncovered a great mass of coins. Soon the treasure was piled high on the deck of the lugger. All of the coins were Spanish, most of them silver dollars, but there were many gold coins as well. They bore various dates between 1800 and 1833. The fact that they were Spanish does not necessarily mean they came from a Spanish ship, because such coins were in regular use as international currency.

Jardine distributed a generous portion of the treasure among all his lugger crews; the rest, which he kept himself, weighed 417kgs. However, a short time later, Captain Roe left Jardine's fleet and together with Charles Bruce and a small crew of divers, sailed a hired lugger back to Boot Reef. Roe had told friends that far more treasure was waiting to be released from the coral of the reef. But whether Roe and his colleagues did find more treasure at Boot Reef remains a mystery. Some weeks after the expedition had set sail, their lugger was found abandoned on a beach in the Gulf of Carpentaria. The decks were stained with blood, but there was no sign of survivors.

What happened to Roe, his crew, and the treasure? No-one knows, but some months after the finding of the blood-stained lugger, Frank Jardine hired a native diver who was carrying Roe's watch. On questioning the man, he was told that Roe and Bruce did find a great treasure at Boot Reef. The lugger had then sailed to the western coast of Cape York and anchored off a small bay between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers. The treasure was taken ashore and buried. The plan was to sail back to Somerset and claim that no new treasure had been found at Boot Reef; but once at sea, and for no apparent reason, Bruce shot Roe and threatened the native crew. A general melee developed and Bruce was stabbed to death by one of the divers; the rest of the small crew dived over the side and swam ashore, where they split up and went their own ways.

> In August 1877, Weiberg removed 5000 sovereigns from the ship's bullion room and smuggled them ashore

Whether or not Frank Jardine believed the man's story, we don't know; nor has anyone ever claimed to have found a buried treasure somewhere on the coast of the York Peninsula between the Mitchell and Staaten Rivers. Equally, no-one has ever explained the mysterious fate of Roe and Bruce. And is there still more undiscovered treasure on Boot Reef?

2. The Avoca Gold Treasure

Martin Weiberg was a carpenter on the *SS Avoca,* a ship engaged on the Sydney-Melbourne run in the 1870s. The vessel regularly carried large amounts of gold, and in August 1877, Weiberg removed 5000 sovereigns from the ship's bullion room and smuggled them ashore.

The robbery had been carefully planned, and after removing the sovereigns from one of the strongboxes, Weiberg filled the box with lead and carefully resealed it. The strongbox was transferred to the *SS China* in Melbourne without the robbery being detected. The *China* sailed to Ceylon, and it was not until her arrival there after many weeks that the theft was discovered.

The police in Melbourne carried out a lengthy investigation, but Weiberg did not come under suspicion; in the meantime, he had rented a property on the Tarwin River in Gippsland. There he lived with his wife and one of her sisters, a girl named Emma Brackley, who was employed as a servant. One day, Emma discovered a dozen or so sovereigns hidden among bars of soap in the pantry. That night she told her boyfriend, the local policeman, about her find. The zealous young officer passed on the information to his sergeant, who in turn mentioned it to a Melbourne detective. A few days later, Inspector Secretan, Detective Mackay and two constables travelled down from the city to interview the Swedish carpenter. While searching the house they found 35 sovereigns hidden in a broken carpenter's plane, and 21 more under a log in an outhouse.

Unfortunately for Weiberg, the sovereigns stolen from the *Avoca* were all "Wreath" sovereigns intended for use in Ceylon. Apparently, the Ceylonese objected to the more familiar "St George and the Dragon" sovereign, so all the coins carried by the *Avoca* were Wreath sovereigns dated 1877. After a lengthy interrogation Weiberg confessed to the crime and produced several hundred of the stolen sovereigns. He then agreed to take the policemen to the spot where he had hidden the remainder. The party travelled on horse-back to Anderson Inlet, then engaged a local fisherman named Laycock to take them up the river by boat. Eventually, Weiberg pointed out two trees and claimed the sovereigns were in a box at the bottom of the river between the trees. The two constables were instructed to dredge the river, and Secretan, Mackay and Weiberg watched from the bank. Suddenly, Weiberg struck Mackay a savage blow in the stomach and darted off into the bush.

Weiberg stayed at large for five months but was eventually recaptured in May, 1979. A month later he stood trial, was found guilty of theft, and was sentenced to five years imprisonment. The *Victorian Police Gazette* records that Weiberg was released on June 4, 1883. Soon afterwards, Weiberg bought a yacht called the *Neva;* he paid 90 pounds for the vessel and another 50 pounds to have her properly fitted out. But soon after his purchase of the *Neva* came the news that Weiberg had been drowned. A report of his death was published in the *Argus* in October 1883. Since then innumerable treasure hunters have searched for the *Avoca* gold — apparently without success. There are two most favored sites for Weiberg's sovereigns: somewhere in the Tarwin River, or buried on the coast between Waratah and Cape Liptrap, about 25 kms from the Tarwin.

3. Ben Hall's Treasure

On June 15, 1862, Frank Gardiner and his band of outlaws pulled off the biggest robbery ever carried out by Australian bushrangers. Their haul included 2719 ounces of gold and 3700 Pounds in banknotes. Gardiner's "team" consisted of Ben Hall, Alex Fordyce, Henry Manns, Johnny Gilbert, John O'Malley, Johnny Bow and Dan Charters. After the robbery, the gold was weighted into eight equal shares. Ben Hall buried his portion of the loot at the bottom of a waterhole, and decided to resume the respectable life of a squatter. However, the police were after him and, during the next three years, Hall and his gang became Australia's most reckless and infamous bushrangers. In May 1865, Hall was trapped in a police ambush and shot to death. The rumors regarding his hidden treasure started almost immediately. The most persistent story suggested that Hall had secreted more than 100,000 pounds worth of gold and jewels in a waterhole near Mount Wheogo. When his son Harry grew up, he made several trips to Wheogo and searched fruitlessly for his father's "plant".

In 1912, two Americans named Monty and Fred arrived at Wheogo Station and, after obtaining permission from the owner to do some "prospecting", they dug on Mount Wheogo for 10 days before leaving with a load of rock specimens. After they had gone, the owner noticed that they had been digging right on the site of Frank Gardiner's old hide-out at the top of the mountain. Locals believed they were Gardiner's twin sons searching for Ben Hall's share of the gold from the 1862 robbery. To date, no-one has ever claimed to have found Ben Hall's "plant", and at current market values it would certainly be worth finding.

4. The Dead Horse Treasure

In 1880, four prospectors — Henry Roberts, Fred Starke, Harry Houschildt and John Noltenius — found a rich vein of gold near Brock's Creek, about 160kms south of Darwin. The strike was so rich that by the end of a week's work the men had won over 800 ounces of gold; however, with the wet season already started, they packed their gear and prepared to return to Darwin. The gold was put in a saddle-bag on one of the horses, which was tethered to a bush a few yards from camp. To celebrate their last night at the site the four men got gloriously drunk, and began to sing, shout and fire off rifle shots. So noisy were the celebrations that the packhorse took fright, broke its bridle and galloped away into the night. For the next six months the miners searched for the missing horse, but they never found it; and even today, prospectors passing through the area closely examine any horse skeleton they find in the hope of retrieving a treasure which could now be worth $250,000.

5. The Ballina Treasure

A few days before the outbreak of World War I, the German Consul in Sydney and a group of wealthy German immigrants sent a copper chest full of sovereigns and jewels back to Europe on the steamer *Sedlitz*. However, fearing that his ship would be captured and himself interned, the captain of the *Sedlitz* decided to bury the treasure and, hopefully, retrieve it after the war. The spot he chose was on a beach near Ballina.

> The captain of the *Sedlitz* decided to bury the treasure. The spot he chose was on a beach near Ballina

As it happened, the *Sedlitz* avoided Allied warships and reached Germany safely, but the captain and the few others who knew the precise whereabouts of the copper chest perished during the war.

The story of the buried treasure has been common knowledge in Ballina for 60 years, and in 1938 a search was mounted by two Germans. Apparently a quarrel developed between the two men shortly after they arrived, and after a few days they parted company and left the district. The Ballina treasure remains to be discovered on a beach near the town.

6. The Long Island Treasure

Long Island, situated in the Whitsunday Passage off the Queensland Coast, is now a popular tourist resort. On a beach there is an old wrecked ship and until recently, parts of the prow and stern posts of the vessel could be clearly seen at low tide. A sheep farmer named Kean, who lived on a nearby island, became interested in the wreck in 1892. At that time the ship was not sunk so deeply in sand and he was able to get inside the hull, where he found a quantity of silver cutlery and silver plate. On the shore, just above the high-water mark, he found a Spanish coin and, about 200 metres further inland, more coins — both silver and gold. Close to the last coin were the remains of a pick and shovel, both badly rusted. Kean became convinced that a buried treasure was to be found on the island and he spent many years searching for it before he was forced to leave the Whitsunday area because of ill-health.

According to local legend, the ship's captain had decided to stop at Long Island to trade with aborigines. During the bartering a quarrel broke out and a native was stabbed by one of the seamen. To avenge his death, the victim's comrades raided the ship during the night and murdered all the crew.

Another mystery associated with the wreck concerns six cannon balls which were found close by at Happy Bay. They were 14kg iron-shot, suggesting that the vessel was wrecked before 1850. The ship was constructed of teak and therefore was probably built in the East; an English ship of the same period would almost certainly have been of oak. Crockery from the wreck was examined by a Sydney expert, who identified it as Chinese, belonging to a period between 1740 and 1840. Perhaps one day a way will be found to examine the wreck more thoroughly. If this were possible, it might throw some light on the "Long Island Treasure Trove."

7. The Inverloch Treasure

In 1938, a small, dapper middle-aged man named Donald Nicholson arrived in the Victorian seaside town of Inverloch. When Nicholson died 16 years later, scores of people had wasted their time and money helping him search for a treasure, and the story had been brought to the notice of the Governor-General and the Prime Minister. At one point, a detachment from the Australian Army was ordered to help Nicholson in his quest for the treasure.

On arrival at Inverloch, Nicholson pitched camp beside Screw Creek, about five kilometres from the town. From the bank of that stream rises a hill called "Savages Hill", and it was here that he concentrated his search for the treasure. According to Nicholson, his grandfather had been deeply involved in the opium trade with the Chinese during the 19th Century. In payment he had received English sovereigns, gold dust and jewels. Over the years the grandfather had accumulated a vast fortune and, because of the illicit nature of the enterprise, he buried a large part of his treasure in a steel box on Savages Hill.

Nicholson had no evidence to support his story, but he was apparently an intelligent, well-educated and very convincing man; he had no qualms about

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accepting money from local people for "shares" in his treasure.

Nicholson dug away at Savages Hill month after month, year after year; most of the holes were two and a half metres deep, but one was a tunnel running into the side of the hill. In 1940, Nicholson wrote to the Governor-General asking for help in the search. His letter was passed on to the Prime Minister, who in turn handed it on to the Australian army. The army sent a squad of engineers to Inverloch, including two colonels and three demolition experts. The soldiers worked for 10 days and then decided to blow a section of the hill away with explosives. Before the charges could be fired, a message arrived from Melbourne ordering the troops to call off the search immediately. Why the army was told to abandon their work at Savages Hill has never been explained.

Four years later, a group of local farmers formed a syndicate and helped Nicholson sink a deep shaft into the hill, but nothing was found. In 1954, Nicholson became so convinced that he was on the verge of finding the treasure that he ordered a brand new Rolls Royce. But later in the same year he became ill, was taken to the Alfred Hospital in Melbourne, and a few weeks later died from a stroke.

The Inverloch Treasure of gold and jewels — if it exists — would be worth about $200 million in today's currency; but the man who owned Savages Hill was certain no-one could have buried any treasure there at the turn of the century. He and his family knew the hill well and passed over it almost every day. But if this is the case, why on earth did Donald Nicholson suddenly turn up in Inverloch and spend the next 16 years digging holes in a hill?

8. The Dexford House Mystery

For more than 100 years, treasure hunters have searched for a cache of sovereigns said to have been hidden in an old mansion at Westmead, Sydney.

The property, called Dexford House, stood in Hawkesbury Road. In 1963 it was converted into a convalescent home called Cabrini.

The story is that Dexford's first owner sold a large property at Strathfield some weeks before moving into his new home. The proceeds from the sale of the Strathfield property — including some 6500 gold sovereigns — were placed in a metal box in the library of Dexford House prior to being deposited in a bank. Apparently, the box was then taken by an "absent-minded" relative of the owner and hidden somewhere in the house. Despite an intensive search, the gold was never found. Thereafter, the "mad" relative was committed to an asylum and presumably — because he was never released — he could not recall where he had hidden the metal box and its precious contents.

9. Lord Howe Island Treasure

Five thousand gold sovereigns lie buried on Lord Howe Island and the story surrounding them is very well-documented. The money was hidden by a Captain Rattenbury, skipper of the whaling brig *George,* which was wrecked at Lord Howe in 1830. Earlier that year, the *George* had sold her cargo of oil in Sydney for cash. The money was taken aboard the vessel, which then sailed north in search of more whales. While cruising near Lord Howe a fog came down and the brig struck a rock, now called "George Rock". Rattenbury managed to beach the ship and the money was taken off and buried. The castaways remained hidden in caves around the bay until they were rescued some weeks later by the *Mary Elizabeth* and the *Nelson.* In 1831, Rattenbury returned to Lord Howe to recover the treasure, which according to all accounts was buried somewhere around the base of Mount Gower. Unfortunately, during his absence a landslide had come down from the mountain, burying the gold under thousands of tonnes of earth and rock.

> Many treasure hunters have combed Bruny Island, but the chest containing the "Hope Treasure" still lies undiscovered

The treasure is mentioned in the log of the barque *Caroline,* where Captain Tregurtha made the following entry:

> "December, 1831. Sailed from Hobart Town on a whaling voyage and shaped a course for Howe's Island. My mate said he knew where a treasure was buried. On 15th December, we sighted the island and launched two quarter boats. It took us seven hours to reach the shore, where we found a great number of bronze-wing pigeons. We shot about 70 of them but were unable to find the treasure, as the country seemed to have altered considerably, my mate said."

10. Tasmanian Treasure

The waters around Tasmania have always been treacherous for sea-faring men. On King Island alone more than 50 ships were wrecked up to 1861, when a lighthouse was finally built there. The majority of ships lost around Tasmania were loaded only with general cargo, but a few carried treasure.

The *Hope* was wrecked near the mouth of the Derwent River on April 29, 1827. She went aground on a beach now known as Hope Beach, and a whaling boat rescued the passengers and crew some hours later. A chest of gold coins had been part of the *Hope's* cargo, and it was in the charge of two soldiers. At the time of the wreck it disappeared and both soldiers were strongly suspected of hiding the treasure during the confusion.

Some months later the two soldiers were transferred to India, where one died. Eventually, the other returned to England and received his discharge. A year later, in Ireland, he met a farmer named McKinnon and the pair made a bargain whereby McKinnon was to go to Tasmania and recover the treasure.

McKinnon arrived in Hobart and brought provisions and a miner's right. He began to search for the treasure — not on Hope Beach, but at Denne's Point on Bruny Island, about six kilometres away. The Irishman searched for several weeks without success. Eventually, he returned home and obtained a more detailed map from the ex-soldier. With this he returned to Tasmania and resumed the search. This time he scoured the area around Bligh's Point, also on Bruny Island; but again he was unsuccessful, and after his money ran out he worked as a laborer in Hobart until his death a year later.

Many treasure hunters have combed Bruny Island between Denne's Point and Bligh's Point, but the chest containing the "Hope Treasure" still lies undiscovered.

11. Queenscliff and the Treasure of Lima

It would seem highly unlikely, if not downright incredible, that a legendary treasure from Lima, Peru, should lie buried in a cave at Queenscliff, Victoria. Yet fortune hunters over the years have searched here for a treasure trove said to consist of hundreds of rare jewels and two solid gold human images about two metres tall. The treasure is reputed to have been hidden by the pirate Benito Bonito, and is claimed to be the same "Loot of Lima" as that sought by many expeditions to Cocos Island off the coast of Costa Rica.

Treasure seekers at Queenscliff claim that Bonito did not sail for Cocos when looking for a hiding place for his plunder, but instead headed for the Australian coast. While hiding the treasure in a cave near Queenscliff, the priates were surprised by a British warship. Bonito blew up the cliff face to seal the cave and then made off. Soon afterwards, however, all the pirates were captured and hanged except for a cabin boy, who escaped to Tasmania. He was said to have had a map

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showing the location of the treasure tattooed on his arm. Unlikely as this story may seem, scores of individuals and syndicates have searched for the Queenscliff treasure, but so far to no avail.

12. The Zuytdorp Treasure

The wreckage of the *Zuytdorp,* a Dutch treasure ship, lies at the base of steep cliffs on one of the most desolate and forbidding stretches of the Western Australian coastline. The ship smashed into the rocks sometime during the year 1712.

In 1927, a bushman named Tom Pepper climbed down the cliffs to do a spot of fishing. On the sand he found a handful of Dutch coins, all dated 1711. For many years Pepper kept his find secret, although he paid more visits to the scene of the wreck and collected a number of relics. Eventually he told a young geologist, Phil Playford, about his discovery. Playford visited the wreck and found more coins. In 1954 he led an expedition which carried out a more comprehensive search.

Dutch records show that the *Zuytdorp* undoubtedly carried a valuable treasure on her last voyage — possibly up to 100,000 guilders in silver coins. Several recent expeditions have been made to the site of the wreck, but diving conditions there are extremely hazardous, and calm spells are so rare on this part of the coast that to date, the "Treasure of the *Zuytdorp*" remains undisturbed. The wreck is situated about 75 kms north of the mouth of the Murchison River, the exact position being: latitude 27° 11' 10" South, longitude 113° 36' East.

13. Lasseter's Reef

In 1930, Lewis Harold Bell Lasseter claimed that he had discovered a fabulously rich gold reef in the "dead heart" of Australia. However, although the search for Lasseter's Reef has been carried on by one expedition after another right up to the present day, many people are firmly convinced that it does not exist.

Lasseter claimed that in 1897, while prospecting for rubies in the MacDonnell Ranges, he got lost and came upon the gold reef by chance. Then he wandered on until rescued by an Afghani camel driver. In his hand was a bag of rock specimens richly studded with gold. Again according to Lasseter, three years later he and a surveyor named Harding successfully relocated the reef. They took bearings, but on returning to Carnarvon they found that their watches were 75 minutes slow. This meant the bearings taken at the reef would also have been incorrect.

In 1916, the Western Australian government financed a search for the reef, but the expedition was attacked by aborigines and ended unsuccessfully. In 1930 came Lasseter's last attempt to rediscover his lost reef, and of course it ended in tragedy when he perished in the Petermann Range. Bob Buck, a well-known bushman, found Lasseter's body after an 11-week search. In 1957 Lee Robinson, a Sydney film director, and Lowell Thomas, the world-famous American journalist, travelled to Lasseter's grave and brought the bones back to Alice Springs for reburial. Lasseter's son said he was quite satisfied that the remains were those of his father.

Geologists do not believe that gold exists in the Petermann Range. But if Lasseter's Reef does exist, sooner or later it will be found. Although 50 years have passed since the old prospector died, interest in his story has never waned.

14. Lindo's Lost Reef

The hunt for Lindo's Reef has continued for more than 130 years. Scores of prospectors, both amateur and professional, have looked in vain for the elusive gold, said to lie somewhere in the Monaro district of southern NSW. In 1849, Lindo was in charge of a survey party camped near the Big Badja Mountain. One day he left camp with a pick, a shovel and a bag; when he returned, he was carrying the bag — which appeared to be heavy — but did not have the pick or shovel. He confided to a friend he had found a rich reef of gold.

Shortly afterwards, Lindo left Australia for London in order to raise finance to exploit the reef. Unfortunately, he took ill in England and died. Some years later, a prospector found the remains of an old pick and shovel near Badja and this revived interest in the story of the lost reef. Many searches have been carried out in the vicinity, and some very experienced prospectors have no doubt that one day the reef will be rediscovered.

"How's the diet going, dear?"

15. Dead Man's Secret

Frank Jardine was one of Northern Australia's foremost pioneers and explorers. He was not a man to go off on a wild goose chase. About 120 years ago, an old prospector staggered up to the Jardine homestead at Somerset on the tip of Cape York. He was very weak and delirious. The Jardines put him to bed and nursed him as best they could, but he was obviously near death. In a bag which the prospector had carried were rock specimens heavily studded with gold. Unfortunately, the old man was too weak to talk and all he could do was point his arm in a westerly direction. Soon afterwards he died.

Frank Jardine and a friend, Jack Williams, made several attempts to find the reef. Natives told them it was near a wreck on the south side of the Escape River. But the gold was never found. Men who know the Cape York Peninsula country believe the reef could be situated between the Jardine and McHenry Rivers, probably in a range of hills about 25 kms to the west of False Orfordness. However, the main difficulty in searching for "Dead Man's Secret" is that most of the area is covered by a growth of turkey-bush scrub — so thick and tough, in many places it is impenetrable.

Frank Jardine went to his grave convinced of the existence of the dead man's secret reef. Perhaps one day the turkey-bush scrub will give up its secret and reveal a reef worth a fortune.

16. The Coorang Massacre

In July 1840, the interstate trading brig *Maria* was wrecked on a reef off the South Australian coast. She carried a total of 27 people, including six children. Among her cargo were two iron cases, one containing 4000 sovereigns, the other 2600 sovereigns. About 200 kms from Adelaide the *Maria* ran aground on the Margaret Brock Reef. The ship was doomed, but the passengers and crew took to the lifeboats and reached the shore safely, landing somewhere near where the town of Kingston.

Both boxes of sovereigns were brought to shore. The castaways, guided by friendly aborigines, decided to walk to the whaling base at Encounter Bay. After travelling about 70 kms they split into two groups. A short while later, both groups were attacked by hostile aborigines and every one of the 27 people were speared or clubbed to death. The natives stripped all the clothes from the bodies and buried the dead in shallow graves scooped out of the sand.

Eventually, news of the massacre reached Adelaide and a punitive expedition was dispatched to investigate. The soldiers found the bodies of 10 of the victims and Governor Gawler ordered the murderers to be found. On August 15, Major O'Halloran and 20 mounted troopers rounded up the Milmendjuri tribe — about 200 men, women and children. Through interpreters the natives admitted killing the *Maria* castaways, and two ringleaders, Mongarawata and Pilgarie, were hanged in front of the assembled tribe.

O'Halloran recovered the *Maria's* log book and most of the ships papers, but the natives claimed to know nothing about the boxes of "yellow money". Official records show that less than 200 sovereigns have been recovered, so a considerable treasure probably still lies in the sands near Kingston, South Australia.

17. Mer Island Treasure

Claims are often made that the Torres Strait is littered with the wrecks of Spanish Galleons. However, this assumes that the strait was once a main sea-lane for treasure galleons. As far as we know, the first white man to pass through Torres Strait was Luis Vaez de Torres in 1606, and no other European sailed through the strait until Captain Cook did so in 1770. In fact, at no time did Spanish Galleons use the Torres Strait. Nevertheless, there probably are treasure wrecks lying on the seabed in the strait. American ships once used the strait as a regular sea-lane to China and the East Indies; and the strait was used by Chinese coolie ships — vessels carrying coolies between China and the Americas.

Mer Island is an extinct volcanic crater, one of the largest in Australia, and is almost completely encircled by a coral reef. There is a native tradition that a ship carrying treasure was wrecked near Mer around 1840. One day a raft was spotted approaching the island carrying several white men and three iron-bound chests. The natives beckoned the men to land. Suspicious, but having little choice, the castaways came ashore and buried the chests. A couple of days later the natives attacked and killed the sailors. Big celebrations and a cannibal feast followed.

Gold and silver coins have been found on Mer, and Captain Dabelle of the Torres Strait Pilot Service discovered an old hourglass there. Whether there are any iron-bound treasure chests buried in the sand has yet to be determined.

> Somewhere on Moa Island, hidden in a sealed cave, is a giant idol made of thousands of rare tortoise-shells

18. Stephens Island Treasure

For generations, natives on Stephens Island have told a tale about a ship wrecked on their island about 150 years ago. The survivors included the captain and his wife, who was apparently a very wealthy woman, liberally adorned with jewellery. All the male survivors were immediately killed by the natives, but the woman was later taken to a clearing, in the centre of which was a carved stone idol. On the lap of the idol the terrified woman saw the severed heads of her husband and the other sailors. The native chief ripped all the jewellery off the woman and used it to decorate the idol; then she was killed and eaten. The tribe continued to worship the idol until 1860, when missionaries arrived in the islands of the Torres Strait. The natives heard that the white man would destroy their stone idol so it was buried near the beach, still decorated with the captain's wife's jewellery.

In 1934, a trochus shell hunter named Bruce found a solid gold ring and some rubies in the sand on Stephens Island. The remainder of the jewellery, claimed to be worth a small fortune, still lies buried on the beach.

19. Moa Island Treasure

"Moa" is the native name for the island; its official name is Banks Island. It is one of the largest of the Torres Strait group — about 30 kms square. Moa is a native reserve and white people are forbidden to land unless they first obtain permission from the Director of Native Affairs on Thursday Island. The natives now living on the island are not the original inhabitants — those were all wiped out in a terrible massacre which took place in 1863.

Somewhere on Moa Island, hidden in a sealed cave, is a giant idol made of thousands of rare tortoise-shells. The idol was always kept in the cave and was only brought out during special sacred rites. When the missionaries arrived, the cave was sealed up and its whereabouts were never divulged. In fact, the only people who knew where it was were killed soon afterwards.

The idol took the shape of a huge dog, about four metres high and six metres long. As most of the island is covered by thick vegetation, finding the sealed cave that holds the "Dog God" presents a very difficult task. But perhaps one day someone will stumble on the cave and recover a treasure of rare tortoise shell.

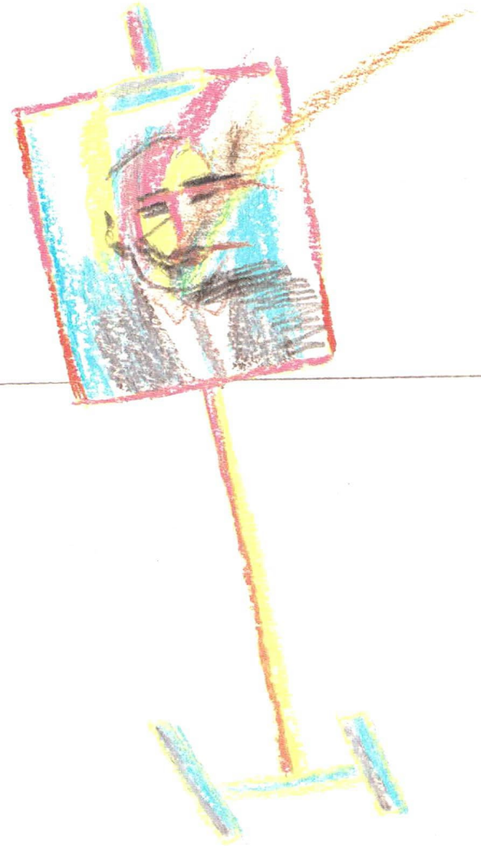
20. Booby Island Treasure

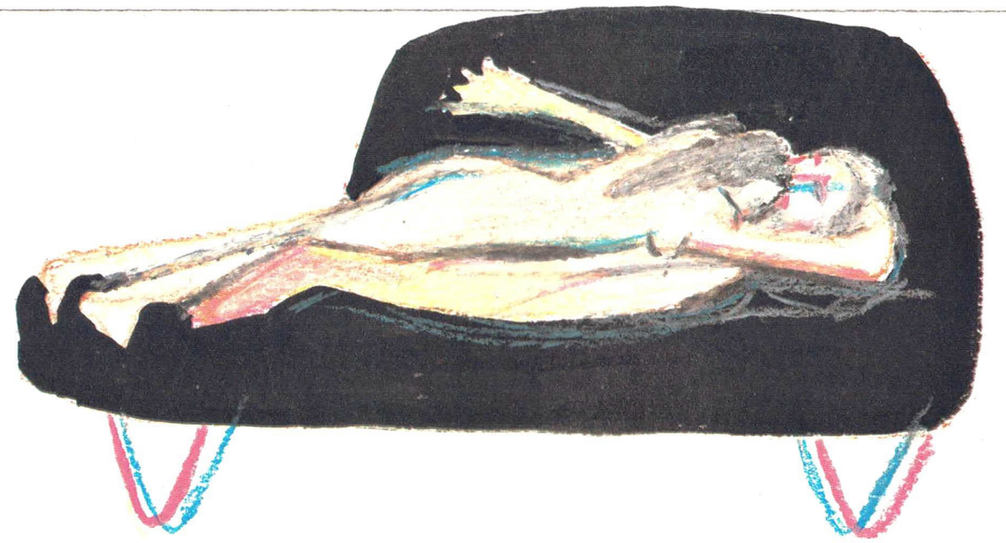
This island is simply a big rock about half a kilometre across and 20 metres high. It is 35 kms from Thursday Island on the south-western edge of Torres Strait. More than 200 years ago it was the headquarters of a gang of Asiatic pirates who habitually plundered passing ships. The treasure they accumulated is said to be hidden on the island.

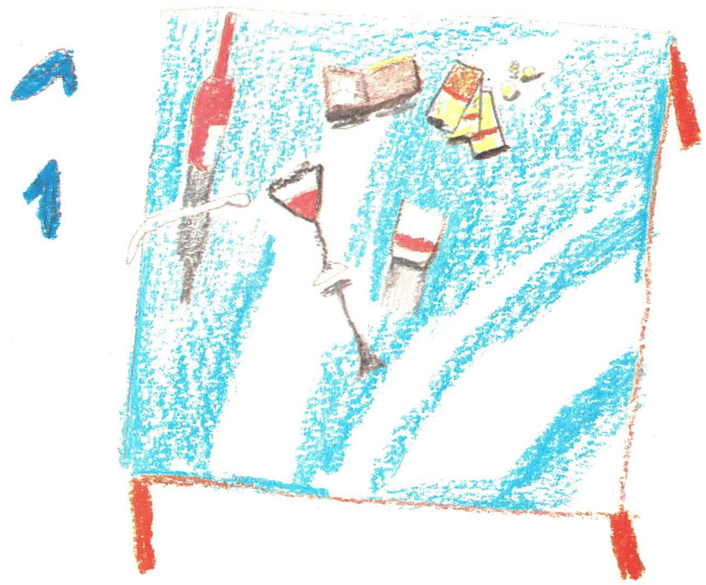
Many old Spanish coins have indeed been discovered on Booby Island, which is riddled with caves. Perhaps a pirate treasure still lies buried in one of them?

It is often extremely difficult to unearth *facts* which could support accounts of hidden "treasure troves"; even if a treasure ever existed, how do we know that someone hasn't already found it?

Treasure Trove legally belongs to the Crown. Any person who finds treasure in Australia, or any person who acquires knowledge of such a find, is required to report it to the authorities. Concealment of such information is an indictable offence. This being the case, it is not surprising that few people report having found buried treasure. Any number of the 20 fortunes listed above may already have been claimed; yet the odds are good that every one of them lies in wait for some skilful, intrepid adventurer.







SANDY

She had everything he wanted and needed; and she was blocking his road to self-destruction

ILLUSTRATION BY GEORGINA STROUD

FICTION BY ROBERT ENGLISH

A friend once told me that if ever he were granted one wish, he would choose to look five years into the future and live one week in his life at that time. It would certainly have been a revelation if I could have done this five years ago. Because five years ago today I was at Delmario's celebrating my 10th wedding anniversary, sipping cold champagne and wondering if my wife would ever stop talking. Something about our eldest boys both being in trouble at

SANDY

school. Trying to look interested, I was at the same time endeavoring to catch a better view of our waitress as she bent down to search for a bottle of wine. She was pretty and had long slim legs under a ridiculously short skirt, and I think I was fantasising about the sort of welcome hidden beneath her white lace panties.

At that time I was a lawyer, established and respected (if one can use that term these days), and one of seven partners in a prosperous commercial practice drawing a minimum of 25 thousand gross. My wife, who was then 28 and a top professional model, was earning slightly less than me, but only because she restricted her activities on account of the children. Otherwise she could have outstripped my salary by a further 25 thousand. Strangely, having the three children seemed to improve her figure so that she often got away with teenage shots. For myself, I can say that I didn't drink to excess and only smoked under pressure. My bloodcount was normal and I looked several years younger than my 32 years. We had two cars, a swimming pool and plenty of paid-up insurance. Looking back now, things must have been pretty good — even though I was bored stupid, and not even the occassional funny business on the side could snap me out of it. I guess most people would say I had it made. But that was five years ago. If only I could have had a glimpse of the future. How it happened or why doesn't seem to matter, because time is the only thing that can't be retrieved.

But here I am five years later, living in a rented two-room house in the worst part of Balmain. I still smoke, but now it's 60 a day. And I drink a bit too. Ten cans a day — every day. And that's before I hit the Scotch. My family still lives in the house with the pool, but the mortgagees are threatening to sell. My wife has our only car — a small Japanese model that squeezes out 40 to the gallon. The eldest boys were taken out of the private school when the Board of Trustees found it impossible to extend my credit beyond three terms. Not that it matters much. Their first day out of school will probably be their first day on the dole. My wife looks even better but she still talks too much — usually about our debts. Although she has a steady man she insists on financial independence — but not from me, unfortunately. Consequently, I'm forever on my toes avoiding the bailiffs she sends out when there's no money for maintenance.

I've finished the novel, but it lies unpublished. Something about the state of the economy and, more particularly, the publishing industry itself. Seems they can only take a chance on established authors. And even then it's good if they cut even. So now I write short stories for the glossy magazines and an occasional article for the weeklies. This keeps me alive and the kids in baked beans. If I gave up the booze they'd probably eat a little better, but Jenny still gets the odd commercial, which keeps us going somehow. And to my former friends, I'm beginning to have the smell of financial death about me. Naturally, my social life is zero. Not that I haven't had enough welcome from waitresses, bar girls and others who have no complaint of my wretched existence. But nothing seems to last. My entrenched ennui and paranoia advertises itself like a visible disease, so that one morning they get out of bed never to return.

I've thought of killing myself (only half-seriously) but the insurance policies have all lapsed. And besides, it would have a detrimental effect on the boys, the youngest of whom is only seven. They still think I'm God, although the eldest is beginning to have his doubts.

I don't know why I'm writing all this. Except, maybe, to salvage a little sanity by attempting to put it into some sort of perspective. The deterioration of a man in five quick useless years. How to get on the slide. And maybe the sequel — how to get off. But how *do* you get off? The stuff you write gets worse as the need becomes more urgent. The booze numbs you out of reality, so that there are no such words as "motivation" or "ambition" or "future". Every female who climbs into your bed expects more than she's going to get, because you really don't care that much. And the only way to get rid of the creeping anxiety that assails you on waking each moring is to repeat in your mind such philosophies as "in spite of" until it's midday and you can, without much conscience, open the first beer. And then you read somewhere that the guys who wrote these philosophies all died as disillusioned madmen. And so it starts again.

> The bar was divided. To the left were the intellectuals — huddled, quiet groups of flimsy-bearded goats who talked in whispers

But you have your high points and low points on the metabolic scale, and one day last month must have been a high, because after I'd scraped the dried egg off my breakfast plate and swallowed two cups of sweetened Nescafe I decided to kick the habit of guilty morning writing and walk down to the Governor's Rest for a beer with the other no-hopers who gather there each morning to see what sort of dent they can make in their dole cheques. And if I hadn't gone, I wouldn't have met Sandy.

The gloomy light behind the swinging doors was only a little brighter than my loungeroom, but I was determined to shake my depression. They were all there, for it was then after eleven. The public bar was usually divided into two groups. To the left, in the corner known as Lincoln's Inn, were the intellectuals — huddled quiet groups of flimsy-bearded goats, who talked in whispers as if what they were saying was subversive. I say "goats" because they were. The university dropouts. The would-be, could-be reformers and future politicians (in their minds at any rate). The professional dole-cheats who were always just about to "crack the big one" — the executive position they had worked for, saved themselves for. The communists and the anarchists. And, of course, those who just thought it was a good place to have a drink. Most of them drank orange juice because before leaving home they'd given themselves the roach of last night's joint or a shaving of hash they'd found on the carpet, or whatever, and that would last them until lunchtime, when most would have a plate of sausages and veg for fifty cents and then adjourn to someone's terrace to groove on the music and perhaps have another joint while they saved the world.

At the other end, in the sporting corner, were the local characters. They too were all there. "Harpoon Harry" Lingus was in the centre of the group, as always, surrounded by his obsequious disciples. Harley Chimpanzee, the compulsive gambler and all-time great buffoon, was showing them his sunburn by lifting his shirt and courting sympathy, which wasn't there. Zoot Caledonia, the colored clarinet player, was clipping his nails with a minute pair of scissors and deciding just when and how he would slap Harley on the back.

Dolly Charlemagne was there too, with a girl — a very pretty girl. I thought it unusual for him to be in the bar so early, as Dolly played poker every night at the Calypso Club, which he owned in partnership with Con Figaro, the market king, and Dolly very rarely got out of bed before late afternoon. I first learned of Dolly's claim to fame from the unfortunate Harley Chimpanzee who, one afternoon in the same hotel, was telling me how he had served his apprenticeship at the Calypso by playing stud poker with Dolly. We had been on our seventh or eighth beer and Harley was quite vocal. "I tell you man," he said with dull eyes, "that Dolly Charlemagne is something else. You know what he does?" I shrugged. "When Dolly asks you to play him pocker, you don't refuse. You know what I mean?"

Once more I nodded, even though I didn't quite know what Harley meant. I thought there were rules. He came back with more beers. "But he ain't all that bad," Harley said reflectively, "because when I told him I couldn't pay the two spots, he pats me on the back and tells me I've got a week. Can you believe it? He gives me a week."

"But he stole your money, Harley. How do you accept that?"

"You gotta accept it. That's how he makes his living. He frightens you to death. And nobody, but nobody, ever spills that he cheats. You don't talk about that. You know what I mean?" I shrugged again. Or was it a shudder. I hoped I wouldn't get an invitation to sit down with Dolly, because I too would need a week. Or a month.

Anyhow, that day Dolly was there with the girl and as I joined the group he introduced us. "Hey buddy," he called out, "come and meet my new girl, Sandy." The girl, who should have been overawed like most of Dolly's girls, was not overawed. In fact she looked a little bored. She hardly looked up, but after a cursory glance she offered me a disinterested "hi" and returned to what looked like a lemon squash. "Come on honey," Dolly persisted, wrapping a grotesque hairy arm around her smooth bare shoulders, "this here is a special friend of mine. An intellectual. An ex-lawyer and a famous writer. He represents the class in this group of morons." She looked up again as if she were prompted to tell him that she believed it, but instead she just smiled. A mechanical, practised smile, but this time I saw her eyes. The deepest green under long black lashes. And there was something else in them too, only now it was hidden, as if some special eye-drops had wiped it away. It was . . . fun. That's what I saw for just that second. Fun that had been eradicated, presumably by the company she was with. It obviously wasn't her scene and Dolly wasn't her kind of man. I wondered whether I was.

Through the next round of drinks I couldn't keep my eyes off her. Harley Chimpanzee was relating an episode from his hideous life — something about how he lost seven pounds in weight just standing on a queue to get a beer at the Watson's Bay during Saturday's heatwave: "I'll tell you guys, she is the slowest barmaid in this town. When she starts pouring a beer you can all go and have a crap and a sauna, and when you get back she'll almost have it ready. And make sure you give her the right money, because if she has to think about change you can go home and come the next day to get it."

Nobody laughed, but Zoot saw his chance and whacked Harley on the back, and then everybody laughed. All except the girl. She was busy looking around the walls as if she had never been in a pub before. The photos of race finishes in their exaggerated color; a couple of group shots of local football teams; the Dart Club's progress scoresheet and a grotesque blow-up of a posed Vic Patrick who, when crouched, looked more like a pygmy than a lightweight. And then her eyes drifted to mine and lingered there for just a second before resuming their cyclic curiosity. But that second was enough. I knew she was curious about me, too.

I decided to take her in more closely. Although she was casually dressed, she hadn't dressed casually. Her fitted jeans were the expensive design-labelled type — the same as my wife wore — and her medium platform sandals were imported, not local. She had on a saucer-necked knitted top which showed just enough of her smooth brown shoulders and the intial rise of her breasts, exaggerated a little by the way she was leaning forward on the stool. She had a green scarf in her hair to match her eyes, but it didn't have the usual pretentious label.

> The touch of her was a magic I had long forgotten. I wanted to be close to her. Skin close. Flesh close. Mind close

Colin Harbinger joined us. He was the local SP and he wanted to tell us how a photo-finish and a late slide in the price had cost him five thousand in the seventh at last night's dogs. Nobody listened. I owed Colin three hundred so I bought him a beer. When Dolly left the group to go to the lavatory I took the opportunity to lean down and whisper close to her ear: "Can I ring you?" She looked straight ahead, as if she hadn't heard, and then Dolly was back. I got no more second glances from her, and which made me a little morose. I don't really know why, unless it was that I considered her too good for Dolly. The rest of the morning was a disaster because before it all broke up, Harbinger had asked me for the three hundred and Dolly had invited me to his poker game. I would now have to write 25 hours a day for the next month. But the day came to an exhilarating finish when, as we shuffled toward the doors, I felt a piece of paper being pushed into my hand. Outside I uncrumpled it and got excited when I read the hasty scribble. It said simply: Sandy 994 6238.

I took her to lunch the next day at that expensive little place on Longnose Point where you can sit out at the tables on the lawn and gaze up the river and forget that you don't have any cash to pay the bill. But you'll think of something. And in any case, Sandy looked so surperb that my mind was many light years from the inevitable hassle that would follow my declaration to the proprietor that I was busted. She had favored me with a dress, so that my prediction that she would have the best pair of legs in the country had been grossly inadequate. She had the most sensational legs in the world. And as she sat there displaying most of them, I had to constantly discipline myself not to do anything gauche, like placing a hand on her knee as we talked. My other guess had been right too. She *was* fun. After the first bottle of Chablis she was the most vivacious creature I had ever met, so that it was no longer necessary to try and play it so cool. As we gabbled a lot of small talk many things crossed my mind, most of which were confusing me. For instance, what was a girl like this doing with a pseudo-crook like Dolly Charlemagne? And for that matter, what was she doing with a run-down hack-writer like me? Surely a girl with such class would have some permanent relationship with a millionaire, or with someone who looked like Warren Beatty, or both.

As I was informing her of the cultural side of my nature, which required every last ounce of my ability to bullshit (because the only cultural encounter I'd had in the past month was to hurl my body on a neurotic artist who thought she could paint hands rather well), I experienced a nagging suspicion that something wasn't quite right. But about what or about whom, I wasn't sure. At the time I didn't even know whether it was about the girl because, as I listened to her talk, it went as it had come and escaped me for some days. By the time we had dispatched a couple of stale prawn cocktails I knew I was losing my normal grip on things. I was bewitched. The way she looked at me felt as if she were reaching over and pulling the guts out of my stomach. And I found myself saying stupid things that I don't normally say — spontaneously. Like "You're beautiful" or "Your eyes are incredible." She would reply by passing her hand across the table and placing it in mine and squeezing it. The touch of her was a magic I had long forgotten. I wanted to be close to her. Skin close. Flesh close. Mind close. She had me and I think she knew it.

As I didn't have a car it suddenly dawned on me that I couldn't get out of the place. We were remote. From the main arteries, that is. And with no cash, a cab was out of the question. Over our third cup of coffee she read my mind. "Can I drop you somewhere?" she said, smiling over the cup. I said, "You have a car?" She could have said something like, "How do you think I got here?" but instead she just smiled and squeezed my hand.

"There's going to be trouble with the

bill," I said lamely.

"Really?" she raised her eyebrows but didn't look too worried. "Perhaps not today."

In answer to my enigmatic stare she went on: "I'm not trying to be pretentious, but the manager here is a special friend of mine. He's already told me that lunch today is on him. But that's up to you."

Normally I would have pushed an after-dinner mint in her face, but I adored her and I had no money. Instead I offered her one. She nibbled at it, holding my reverent gaze, until once more she was at my insides.

"Okay. Let's go," I said, sounding too much like a surly child robbed of his toy, but glad to get out of the place.

"Where to?" she asked, once we were settled in the front seat. I was feeling better so I suggested her place.

"That's impossible." She didn't offer an explanation.

"Why?" I asked, thinking I already knew the answer. But she wouldn't let me find out. She remained silent, staring straight head, with both hands on the wheel.

"Okay," I said, with an alcoholic shrug. "My place."

"Where's that?"

"I'll navigate, if I can remember."

"Good boy."

I have written nothing commercial for a whole week and therefore there is nothing negotiable in my wallet. And my wife is screaming. She doesn't want to know about a wallet that constantly bleeds to death. She just says, "Give it a transfusion." I'm the one who needs the transfusion. Sandy has robbed me of every living organ in my body. It's all in hers. Transferred during nights of lust and greedy takeover. I have lost my soul, my very being to her. She owns me. But why? That's what beats me. A 36-year-old wreck. But she owns me. It's as if she wants a bloodless coup. She can't get enough of me. For the first time in 20 years I think I love someone other than myself. But this morning my earlier suspicions were transformed into something more concrete. "Michael." She is calling from the bedroom. "Is there any coffee?" Of course there's coffee. If there isn't, I'll go to Brazil and get some.

"Coming right up," I say, running to the percolater. I serve it to her in bed. After the night we've just had I am drained, but still in love. That's a first. Usually I'd throw them a buttered Sao and wonder when they'd be going home.

"I've got to go," she says.

"Why, for Chrissake?"

"Because I have to."

"Got someone coming over?" I say frivolously.

"Yes," she says, sipping at her hot coffee. Silence.

"Okay," I say, cool but uncool. "Do you want a shower?"

"Yes, I'd better."

Of course, you bitch. Someone coming over. Let's all smell nice.

"Who?" Really uncool.

"A man."

"What man?"

"I don't know?"

"You don't know?"

"No."

"Well, how do you know he's coming over?" Heart sinking.

"He's got an appointment."

"Oh."

Clarity. Knowledge. The whole scene. Oh, Christ!

"Michael, I'm not trying to be dramatic. And I don't expect you to understand. But please believe me. I've got to go. And whether we see each other again — that's up to you."

"Sure."

She says: "Sometimes you're a helluva bore." How does that make me feel? Stripped. A knight without armor. A man with no pants. Vulnerable

It's been eight weeks now and I'm still seeing her. But only when she's available. At least it costs *me* nothing. I feel I'm saving money. Everything I was, everything I stood for: switch-blade thinking; my unacceptable ideals; my new friends; my impossible associations — all gone! All because of her. I am a child. I feed on her. I depend on her. On the days that I don't see her I bite my nails. And on the days that I do see her I bite my nails. God, she is beautiful. And what's worse, she knows me. No-one — and I mean no-one — has ever known me.

But when I am at my most irritating-mysterious, she just looks at me and says something like: "God Michael, sometimes you're a helluva bore.". And how do you think that makes me fee? Stripped. Nothing left. A knight with armor. A catcher without a mitt. A man without pants. Vulnerable.

"You know man, we don't see you much any more." Harley Chimpanzee was lamenting my absence from the Governor's Rest.

"No," I said.

"What do you mean, just 'no'? I mean, why not? You got yourself trouble?"

"Yes," I said.

"What do you mean, just yes?" he persisted. "You got yourself a woman?"

"Yes," I said.

"What do you mean, just 'yes'? What woman, for Chrissake?"

"The woman who was with Dolly here that day. Sandy."

"Jesus!"

"Yes, Harley, Jesus."

"I mean — I really mean — Jesus."

"Why?"

"Because he's been wanting to know who the bastard is who got her."

"Tell him."

"Tell him? Me, for Chrissake?"

"Why not? He's going to know anyhow."

"Yeah baby, but not me. You tell him. And by the way, he's been asking why you ain't been down to play poker."

"Tell him I haven't got two hundred bucks."

"Jesus, you're cool."

"Ice cold, Harley, ice cold."

"Bad way to be, man."

"At least I don't sweat."

Harley looked at me. "Yeah, I figure." He turned back to his beer. He looked more worried than usual.

"You okay?" I asked.

"Me? Yeah, I'm okay." He was looking down into his glass as if he didn't believe it had a bottom. "No man, I'm not okay," he said at last. I'd never seen him so disturbed. I waited.

"I'm in for 30 thousand," he said vacantly.

"Jesus. How?"

"Horses," he said, as if that explained everything.

"You on the nod?"

"Yeah. Wish I hadn't been. Twenty-one successive photos against me. Can you believe that? Twenty-one against me. Can you believe that? Twenty-one!"

"Somehow I can believe it. I've been there before."

"I'm going to swim the pool, man."

"Swim the pool?"

"Yeah. The Olympic pool. It's how I'm going out. No use doing away with yourself if you can't make any money out of it. You know what I mean?"

"No," I said.

"Well, I see it this way. Most jerks, when they've had enough, either throw themselves off The Gap or give themselves a dose. Tablets or the hose, you know? But that's stupid because there's no-one to see them go. They get nothin'. But what about that Evel Knievel. He had the right idea. It's my guess he intended to commit suicide, but he wanted to make something as he went. But he didn't go. A net got him, but he made nearly a million trying. So's that's what I'm going to do. Go out making it. I'm going to swim the pool, man."

"So what?" I said, trying desperately to follow the madman's thinking.

"So I'm having sharks in the pool. Probably three. All unfed for at least a week so's they're really waiting for me. And I'm getting Harry M. Miller to put the whole show together. A hundred bucks a seat — and it holds five thousand. That's half a big one.

"And if I get through the first swim unharmed they can take around the hat for a further hundred because they'll all reckon I couldn't get through twice. Not with them bastards so hungry. And then my mother can have her operation."

"What operation?" Harley was back looking into his beer.

"She's dying of cancer, man."

"Oh, I'm sorry."

"Yeah."

"But that doesn't cost a million bucks."

"Forty thousand," said Harley Chimpanzee. "In America."

"Oh, I see. Well maybe just one shark and $10 a head."

"You're laughing at me. They all did that. They don't believe me."

"I don't wonder. You're insane."

"No I'm not."

"Well I must admit you're displaying an unusual amount of sangfroid."

"Sang what?"

Just then Caledonia walked in as Harley left for the lavatory.

"You know about the big swim?" I asked.

"Yeah. Great, isn't it? Dolly's setting it up and Harbinger's making book."

"No. Be serious."

"Who's not serious? The guy's off his nut. But we're all going along with it."

"But what about his mother?"

"A nose job."

"A nose job?"

"Yeah. Sort of face lift. Four thousand bucks. But somehow Harley's got it up to cancer and 40 thousands."

"Sounds like Harley," I said. "But what's Dolly doing?"

"He reckons he knows a guy with some really big freshwater carp. And the condi- Harley'll be in, they'll look like sharks if they're up the other end of the pool. Going to feed them, you know?"

"Oh god."

"No. It'll be a blast. And Dolly's going to pay all the neighborhood kids 20 cents just to come in and cheer so Harley thinks it's the real thing. As I say, the condition he'll be in he won't know the difference. He'll think Harry M. has really got it all together."

"You're all bloody fiends. If I didn't know Harley I wouldn't bother. But Christ, he'll think it's the business. He'll probably die of fright as soon as he hits the water."

"Colin's giving evens he doesn't make the other end, if the carp are big enough."

Despite the grotesqueness of the situation, I had to laugh. And then Harley was back from the toilet.

"Are you coming?" he said grimly.

"Wouldn't miss it for quids," I said.

Her suggestion to move in with me came completely out of the blue. I was staggered. We'd been seeing each other spasmodically for three months, and although the relationship was hardly a Tristan and Isolde affair, I was in as heavy as I'd ever been with anyone. But I'm not being honest. To me, the whole arrangement was lopsided. I seemed to just exist during the times we weren't together. Once it was a full week before she could clear her commitments, and I spent the whole seven days drinking at the Governor's Rest and eating in the Italian joints along the highway up from my place. I only went home to sleep. I couldn't be alone and consequently I wasn't working. My money was down to nothing but I didn't seem to care. And when she did eventually turn up one Sunday night, she acted as if she'd only got out of bed with me that morning. It infuriated me, but she wasn't going to know. We both seemed to be playing one enormous game and she appeared to own the rules. I never mentioned her work, and that was my game of being cool. She didn't mention it either because she didn't have to. But it lay there, just the same, like a dark spectre between us, tearing at my guts so badly that at times I considered tossing it all in. But I never did.

Physically, she drove me made. She was so perfect, so flawless, so sensual that the mere thought of her made me need her

She'd call up on the phone and I'd start living again.

I tried to do a little amateur self-analysis in an effort to work out these strange new emotions. At first I concluded that it was my ego that was causing me to suffer. The fact that I couldn't possess her completely, but had to share her with strangers who paid for the use of her body, had created the new emotion of jealousy. And jealousy, I told myself, was a neurotic emotion — one that I had recognised in so many of my former girlfriends.

One I had sanctimoniously lectured about in trying to smooth things over when it was necessary I keep the body but not the mind. An emotion that I had thoroughly despised — could not understand.

And now it was mine.

And then there was the emotion of distrust. I often thought she was lying to me. I would try to be clever and trip her up, but there was nothing there. She had no reason to lie. I wondered, finally, whether if she gave herself to me wholly, my emotions would be the same, or whether, once my ego appeased, the intensity of my feeling for her would diminish and she would join the long list of cast-offs who had been necessary to feed my demanding narcissism. But she never seemed to be aware of my dilemmas. As she could accept the situation, I suppose she felt that I should too. So it was always good when we'd been apart for a while. And the game of boredom — a real winner when we'd been together for longer than usual. Then the games of pretending to be vague — and so on.

My immaturity was beginning to amaze me.

Physically, she drove me mad. She was so perfect, so flawless, so sensual that the mere thought of her when we were apart made me instantly erect and needing her. With other women there was invariably a physical turn off. Perhaps I had always suffered from a perfection neurosis, or maybe I just used these inconsequential flaws as a defence against becoming involved more deeply. One girl I knew had a mole on her left buttock. Quite innocuous and to some people an attractive mark. But when the physical magic had begun to pale I became more and more aware of it. It amazed me. It was ugly, especially when I perceived that it had a short black hair protruding from its centre. It became a turn-off. With another girl I started to notice the hairs in her nose. It was ridiculous. I had never seen them before. And likewise with a series of innocent blemishes such as second toes longer than the big toe, slightly damp hands, a rumbling stomach or accidental fart, bony knees and elbows, and finally bad gums. Neurotic madness.

But if Sandy had possessed all these drawbacks I would either have not noticed them or adored them. As I said, she was perfect. And then, she would add to her perfection with a multitude of turn-ons. The gossamer-fine gold chain bracelet around her left ankle, which she only wore when she wanted me to make love to her, or so she said. As soon as I saw she was wearing it I would be gone. Her constant switching of perfume — all French except one. A Japanese blend which she used in concert with the ankle chain. Her olive skin, incredibly smooth to the touch and always with the merest suggestion of moisture from a secret supply of body lotions. A slight lisp which she acquired when teasing me out of a mood or seducing me. In moments of paranoiac anxiety I wondered whether she employed these little extras when entertaining her clients. But naturally I never mentioned it. She was cool, efficient, enigmatic and fascinating.

SANDY

A knock-out package. In other times she might have been a Sheba, a Salome or a Cleopatra. Maybe I'm exaggerating. When you desire a woman, perhaps she's all of these.

But that morning down in the park, idly watching the river traffic as it labored upstream, she happily announced that as she was in love with me, it would be a good idea if she moved in. She was a different person — overflowing, effervescent. She clung to my arm as she talked, and she constantly searched my eyes for approval. It was as if these past three months had been a testing period — a sort of trial. And having passed on all scores, I had been accepted, so that she could now reveal her true self. The shock of her transition soon passed and I remember being left with a feeling of complete contentment. As if a battle had been won. Suddenly I felt equal. Or was it something more? Was it that I now felt dominant?

"Do you love me, Michael?" I looked down at her, watching the smile flickering its dimples at the corners of her mouth. A simple question. Why delays?

"Yes," I said at last, but sounded a little like John Barrymore at his peak.

"But do you *really* love me?"

Why did I think so hard? "You know I do, for Chrissake."

"Well say it."

"Say what?"

"Say you love me, Michael."

I was irritated now. "Jesus Sandy, you've just told me I've got a new roommate and now you want a spelt-out declaration of undying affection. Next you'll be suggesting we get married."

"Say it, Michael."

"I love you."

"There. that wasn't difficult was it?"

"What about your work?" It was the first time I'd mentioned it.

"What work?"

"You know what I mean. You don't think I'm going to provide a fucking room, do you?"

"Only for us, darling."She was clinging to my arm. She certainly was different. But her dress was caught at mid-thigh and the view that she offered together with her spontaneous reference to the use of the room had suddenly made me early-morning horny. She must have read the glaze in my eyes.

"Want to get between them?" She skipped and laughed and talked all the way home. She was like a little girl. I was dominant again, and I really wanted that fuck.

"I don't believe it. Is it a bloody mirage?" Harley Chimpanzee held out his hand.

"No, I just need a drink."

"Is it true? Is she living with you?"

"Yes. She's already started the renovations. Today is painting day. Tomorrow it's clearing out around the courtyard."

"Dolly was in yesterday. Says he's going to break your arm. Wanted to know if you were right-handed."

"Tell him I'm ambidextrous."

"Some joke, eh Zoot? The author has a sense of humor."

"Yeah," said Zoot.

Suddenly I realised how much I missed the stimulating conversation of my friends. "You swim the pool yet?" I asked Harley.

"Not yet," he said, instantly glum. "I'm sick. Too sick to go through with it for a while."

"What's wrong?" I asked, knowing I'd never learn.

"The bloodbank. That's what's wrong. I went around on Monday to give them a pint and the stupid bitch took six."

"Six pints?" Even Zoot was incredulous.

"Yeah. Six bloody pints. I'm suing them. Seein' my lawyer this afternoon."

"Dolly was in yesterday. Says he's going to break your arm. Wanted to know if you're right-handed." "Tell him I'm ambidextrous."

"But you only got seven pints, Harley. You're right out a blood, man."

"You're so right, Zoot. That's why I'm suing them."

"Who's your lawyer this time?" I asked.

"I think I'll use Candy Moses. I don't owe him nothin' at the moment."

"Well, good luck, Harley," I offered in a proposed toast.

"Yeah," said Harley reflectively, as if the effort of speaking might put him in a dead faint. "Actually, I shouldn't be drinking," he concluded. "Not enough blood to absorb the sugar."

Then the phone behind the bar rang. It was for me. Sandy wanted to know when I'd be home to start on the painting. I had another beer while I put up with the jibes from the other two, and then left. Life was certainly different.

"Darling," she said, standing over me in the chair and rubbing her hands down my back. "You haven't done any writing for a while. Don't I give you inspiration?"

"All you've given me lately is a paint brush and a bloody hammer. When do you expect me to write, for Chrissake?"

"Well, you could do some at night."

"I'm too tired at night."

"Then why don't you write during the day and help with the house at night?"

"And when do I bloody well sleep?"

"With me — when it's all finished. Your body will be hard from the work and your mind sharp from the writing. I'll be your reward."

"You'll be my bankruptcy. Do you know what all this is costing me? There's nothing coming in."

"I sold a painting today."

Silence. And then: "What painting?"

"One in my zoo series. Five hundred dollars."

"What are you talking about? You don't paint."

"Not lately. I've been too busy with the house. But I've got 13 of them and I've been promised an exhibition."

"But where are they? Why didn't you tell me?"

"No point, really. Not until I'd sold one, at any rate. They're all over in the garage at my old place. The new tenant lets me leave them there."

I sat there, not really believing her. But then she showed me the cheque. "I think we should open a joint account," she said, serious for a moment. "You can bank your earnings from your writing and I can put in the money from my paintings. At the end of the year we'll own this place. What do you think?"

"But when did you do them?" I asked, still phased.

"Over the past year. During the day at the zoo. My night-time activities, as you put it, allowed me to work during the day."

"Sandy, you're incredible. You never mentioned any of this."

"I've got pottery, too. And wall-hangings. And next week I'm getting into weaving. But at the moment you're more important than all this. We've got to get you writing again." Suddenly I felt inadequate.

The exhibition. Every painting was sold — one for $1500. The wall hangings were sold too, and last week she was commissioned to complete her first weaving experiment for $3000! It's getting painful to write all this now, because everything is changing. Sandy has already changed, as I've said. But I'm changing now and so is the whole situation. If I was bored before, I'm devastated now. Everything I think about is in terms of BS and AS: Before Sandy and After Sandy. Never has my life been so affected by one person. And for better or worse? Who knows these things? I'm drinking more and hardly writing at all. But the joint account continues to grow. Her work is getting more and more recognition. Reviews in all the better dailies. Another exhibition planned. Talk of a scholarship. To Italy. Would I go if she got it? What am I now — a bloody handbag?

I've started a second novel. God knows why. It'll probably turn out to be another short story because now I can't think beyond 20 pages. An article it took me two weeks to put together on the analogies between Communism and the Catholic Church netted me $125, but my agent is confident it may be syndicated across the country, in which case there could be another couple of hundred. What shit! Who wants to read that sort of crap? Who cares? I've run out of ideas for short stories and my liver has started to swell. All I think about now is getting boozed and screwing Sandy. I don't really want to talk to her.

Sandy saved my family home by producing $2000. An interest-free loan, she said, payable when my first novel is accepted. Big fucking deal. But I took it anyhow. And where to from here? Where is the balance? Suddenly she is everything and I am nothing. She cooks, she cleans, she does the shopping, she earns the money and in between she produces stuff that blows the mind of every art critic in the country. And she is so beautiful, so constantly desirable, that I am no longer my own person. She not only runs her life, she runs mine. I am now dependent. So I fight her. I try to compete. I am drowning, but the last vestige of self-respect makes me fight.

"Stop talking to yourself. I'm trying to write."

"Sorry darling. I wasn't talking, I was singing."

"Talking, singing, what's the difference? Just give me some silence."

"Okay sweetheart. What are you writing?"

"My elegy."

"Oh. That mood is it? Feeling-sorry-for-ourself-week? What *are* you writing?"

"It's an article on how to keep your equilibrium when all the fart-faces around the place are giving you the shits."

"Sounds interesting. What are you aiming at? An audience of two?"

"That's a bit much to hope for. I'm not trying to write a best-seller."

"Michael, Michael. Don't let's fight."

Funny how a woman's arms wrapped around you can be the most comforting thing in the world — or the most aggravating. I noticed the ankle chain and the Japanese perfume. There was absolutely no reaction. More of an anti-reaction. I shrugged her away. She accepted the rejection with the same calm she always displayed at times like this. And that was annoying too. God, I can't win.

"I'm going out."

"Okay."

"What?"

"I said okay."

"Oh."

I thought of going to the Governor's Rest but every damn mental defective would be there. I settled for the less spectacular Coronation Arms. Builders' laborers and pensioner alcoholics. And a barmaid called Shirley, with whom I had once lain down during a violent period of emotional retreat. As I thought of her, I couldn't for the life of me remember what she looked like.

"Hullo Shirley."

"Hullo stranger."

"How've you been?"

"Can't complain. And you?"

"Just great."

"The usual?"

"Yeah, the usual."

"Coming right up."

And then: "How about when you knock off, you and me get together and screw each other stupid?"

"Okay . . . that's 75 cents."

"What?"

"For the beer, idiot. I knock off at six."

I sat in the corner and watched the parade of Saturday afternoon flotsam and jetsam. Two different radios blared two different race-callers, their respective owners evidently trying to outdo the other

All of them were ogling Shirley as she swung her magical tits behind the bar. None of them would get what I got after six

with volume. The pin-ball clique with their grotesque tee-shirts and thongs — and feet that were beyond washing. The laborers covered in brick-dust, warming up to the usual arguments which would culminate around about the seventh schooner in either a bet or a fight. And all of them ogling Shirley as she swung her magical tits backwards and forwards behind the bar. It gave me a perverse pleasure to reflect that none of them would be getting what I got after six.

I arrived home at 10. Sandy was sitting by the standard lamp, reading. For some reason, I hated her. I was spoiling for a fight but she wasn't playing.

"Have you eaten?" she asked, without looking up.

"My fill," I said, giving her an opening.

"Well, I'm going to bed then."

"Saturday night at home. Whoopee!"

"It all happened before you got home."

"What did?"

"Oh, all the usual Saturday night things. A couple of guys came over and we got out the leather gear, put on a porno movie and got it off together standing on our heads against the wall. Then the vicar called and we had a foursome. You know, the same old thing."

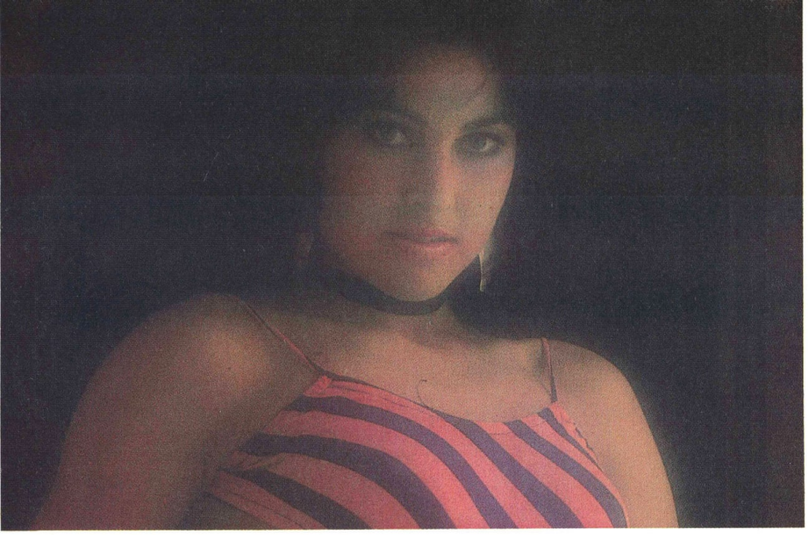
"Christ, you're a riot."

"And you're a fucking bore, Michael. And I'm going to Italy. So go screw yourself." The door slammed, that was that.

I haven't seen Sandy for a year now, but that's not surprising because for nine months I was a guest of the State at Langton Clinic. Not all in one stretch, but on and off for a few weeks at a time. Not very exciting, but on my third visit I fell in love with my female counsellor, who turned out to be more neurotic than I. Bloody disturbing when the psychologists are half round the bend. They made me bankrupt while I was receiving treatment and my wife finally got her divorce so that she could marry a Danish architect who is also a millionaire. So I don't have any responsibilities other than myself. I had only two visitors during the whole nine months — a good illustration of the impact I've had on the world. One was the bailiff who served me with the wind-up papers (the same man reappeared with the divorce petition) and Colin Harbinger, who dropped in to tell me that Harley Chimpanzee had thrown himself under a train at Wynyard station late one Saturday night. Other than what you're reading here, I haven't written anything for a year or more. I keep myself by driving a cab on weekends and helping out as a bar useful at the Governor's Rest during the week. I read about Sandy in the local press from time to time as she cuts a swathe through the European jet-set. She even made the Top 10 in the world's worst-dressed list, which is apparently more prestigious than the other one.

I don't get out much any more. Doesn't seem to be any point. Since Harley killed himself the old group has broken up, and the intellectuals of Lincoln's Inn have gradually disbanded under the pressures applied by the new government. Shirley has got herself married and I never got to know anyone down at the Coronation very well. I've rented a cheap television set and this gets me through until the beer tells me I can sleep. Sandy's presence still permeates the house. She didn't take much with her. She even left the gold ankle-chain, as if it represented a period in her life best forgotten. The bright paintwork in the lounge still reminds me of those winter afternoons when I was writing and she was up a ladder, looking grotesque in one of my shirts, which she used as a cover-all, and that old pair of jeans. Why do I now recall that her second toe was longer than her first. And why am I suddenly crying?

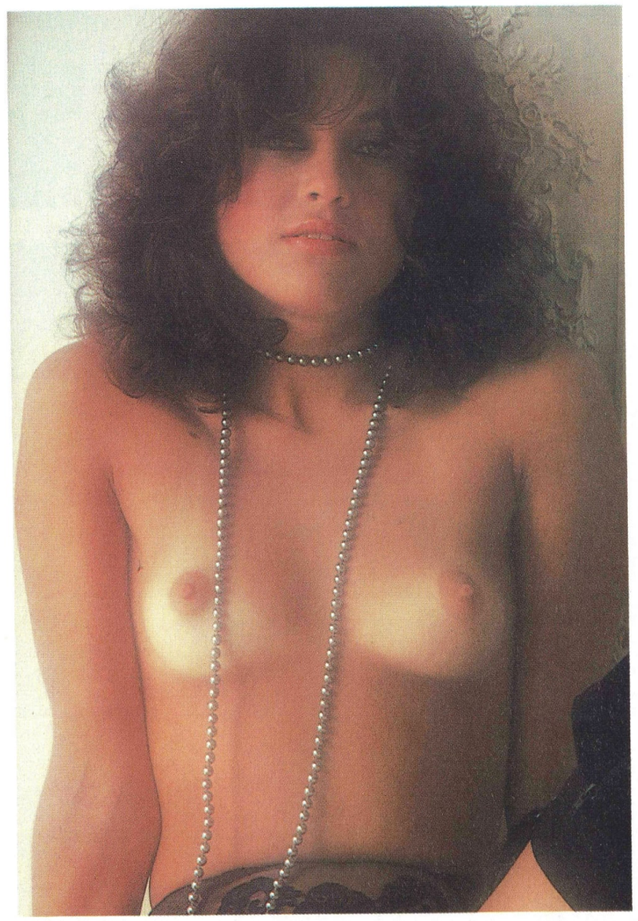
I wrote to her once, care of Poste Restante Europe, but I doubt if she got it. A short note to tell her that I'd picked myself up and finished the second novel, and that I'd received some tempting offers for publication. For some reason, I also told her that I loved her. ○



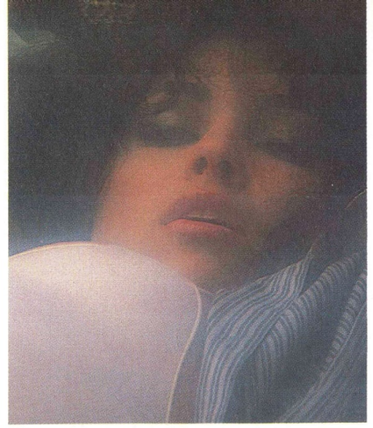
A PIECE OF THE ACTION

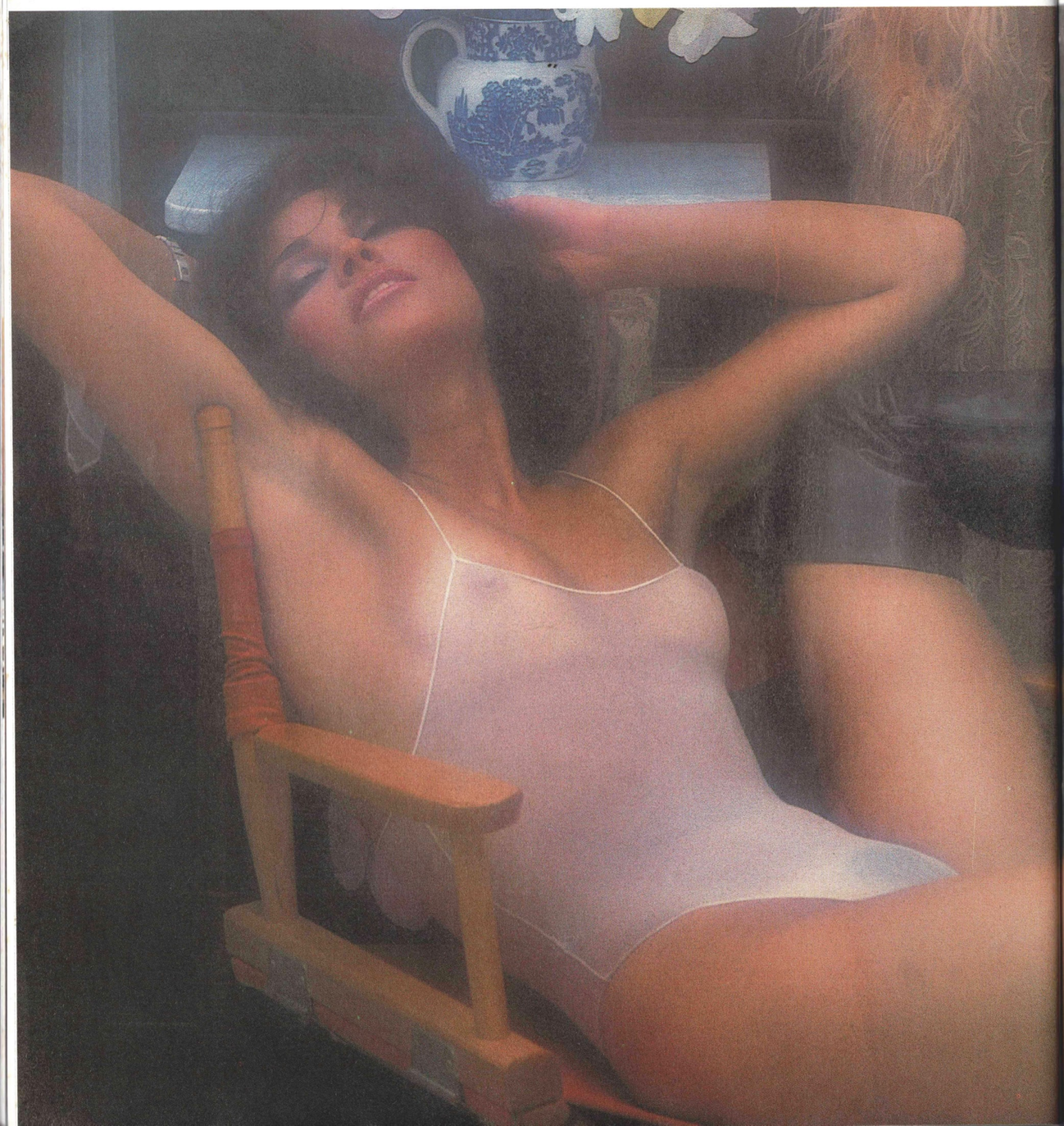
PHOTOGRAPHY BY BOB GUCCIONE

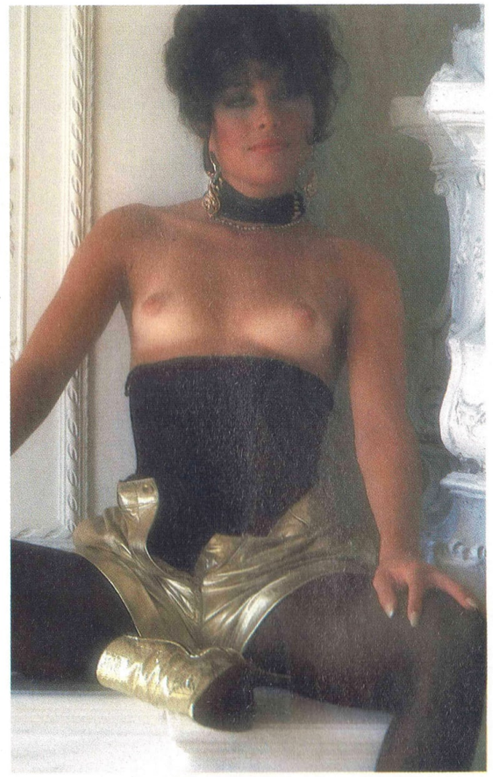
If the face and body look familiar but the name doesn't set bells ringing, it's because Anna Fraley has graced our pages before with the monicker Ava Monet. Once hesitant about the limelight in the United States, our unflappable Pet now proclaims: "Who cares if the Moral Majority doesn't approve — the discriminating majority does." And how. It's small wonder Anna has been voted US Pet of the Year Runner-Up . . .



"It's a dirty job," Anna quips, "but somebody has to do it!" In the past few years Anna has worked as a model, acted in several TV shows, travelled extensively and been the lead singer in a rock and roll band.







Even when she's not behind the wheel of her racy Datsun 280 (with a JADED licence plate), Anna manages to drive men crazy.

"You might say I'm a continual source of delight and confusion for my lovers. I insist on having control and I get away with murder!" Still, she keeps hoping to meet a man who'll tip the balance of power by standing up to her when she acts like a bitch — even if he has to get rough to make her repentant.

Our outspoken Pet admits
she's something of a malcontent.
"I always want things to be
better. I doubt I'll ever be satisfied,
even if the world were run by poets
instead of politicians, even if
we had world peace." Frankly we'd
be satisfied with just a little
piece of Anna.

Grand prix racing has
never been the sport of commoners,
but today money talks like never before

GENTLEMEN START YOUR WALLETS

BY PETER McKAY

Alfa Romeo didn't re-enter grand prix racing for the good times or to publicly demonstrate what a sporting company it was. Alfa was there to win. Last year it sprayed around a reported $20 million on its Formula One program. And it didn't win a solitary race.

So this year Alfa doesn't have a Formula One team, although its engines — developed at such a staggering cost — will be handed on to another team: Euro Racing. Alfa is out, though. Its exit from grand prix racing underscores the harsh realities of life in the fastest lane.

Formula One is big, big business. Billion dollar business. The dollar, the franc, the pound, the lire, the mark, are behind every decision taken by those who control — and in some cases manipulate — the travelling spectacle that is the grand prix circus. The Greatest Show on Earth.

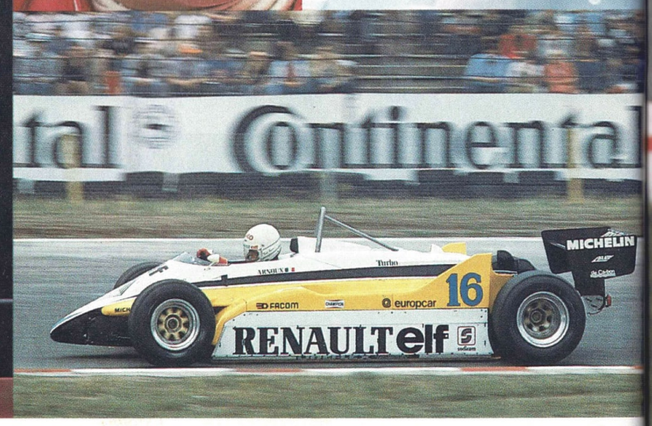
The Williams team, which last year won the world championship for Keke Rosberg, struggles along on a modest budget of eight or nine million bucks. But then, unlike Alfa or Renault or Ferrari, Williams hasn't been involved in a costly engine development program. Formula One teams like Williams that don't rely on their own engines have about 15 Ford Cosworths constantly in use . . . that's about a million dollars worth.

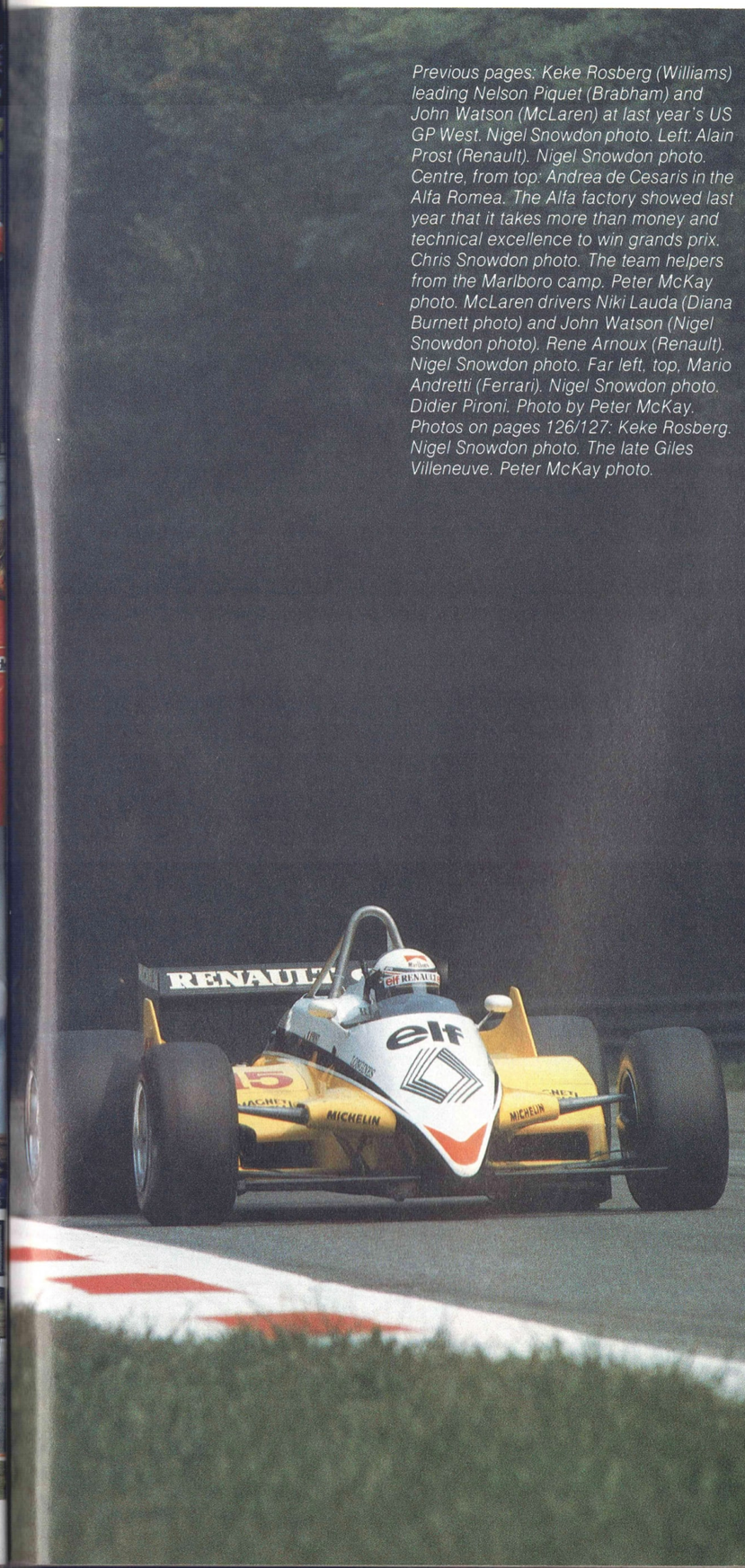
Unlike the old days when most of the teams used off-the-shelf Hewland gearboxes, now many design and make their own to suit the aerodynamics of their current car. The cost . . . up to $16,000 each. And each team needs five.

Today's grand prix race car is valued at a conservative $210,000. To run that one car for a full Formula One season costs $2.5 million.

It's an era where cars are often obsolete before they hit the track. Budgets are stretched by constant research into weight saving . . . components once made from conventional metals now come in titanium. Older-style aluminium chassis cost the teams less than $20,000. Now they're into exotic materials like carbon-fibre and Kevlar.

The McLaren team goes to Utah in the United States for its chassis. There the Hercules company, deeply involved in aerospace and weaponry, handles the exacting work of constructing the chassis from carbon-fibre. It's a $60,000 job. And





Previous pages: Keke Rosberg (Williams) leading Nelson Piquet (Brabham) and John Watson (McLaren) at last year's US GP West. Nigel Snowdon photo. Left: Alain Prost (Renault). Nigel Snowdon photo. Centre, from top: Andrea de Cesaris in the Alfa Romea. The Alfa factory showed last year that it takes more than money and technical excellence to win grands prix. Chris Snowdon photo. The team helpers from the Marlboro camp. Peter McKay photo. McLaren drivers Niki Lauda (Diana Burnett photo) and John Watson (Nigel Snowdon photo). Rene Arnoux (Renault). Nigel Snowdon photo. Far left, top, Mario Andretti (Ferrari). Nigel Snowdon photo. Didier Pironi. Photo by Peter McKay. Photos on pages 126/127: Keke Rosberg. Nigel Snowdon photo. The late Giles Villeneuve. Peter McKay photo.

GENTLEMEN

two car teams like McLaren require five chassis on hand at any one time. No wonder the team breathed a sign of relief when Andrea de Cesaris (pointedly nicknamed de Crasheris) departed for Alfa Romeo at the end of '81; in that one season he'd demolished 19 race cars.

The cash register keeps ticking up expenses. Every two-car team needs spare wheels . . . 40 of them at about $620 apiece. A regular engine overhaul — necessary after just one day's practice and the race — kicks an $8000 hole in the budget. And after any grand prix weekend, a further $6500 is earmarked for replacement parts on each car. Wages? Williams employs 90 people full-time.

Frank Williams' piggy bank doesn't stretch to nine million bucks annually. And prizemoney, though handy, isn't counted in millions. Williams and his contemporaries, and even the big car manufacturers in Formula One, rely largely on sponsorship.

The cigarette companies, not surprisingly, are in Formula One boots and all. But there are some strange dudes among the obvious. Parmalat dairy products. Ragno ceramics. Candy refrigerators. Denim after-shave. Some years ago a car carried the Durex logo . . . Durex being a brand of French letter.

Sucking up to sponsors has brought its own incongruities, like Alan Jones guzzling orange juice on the rostrum instead of the usual bubbly. Jones, it doesn't need to be said, is a man partial to a drop of firewater. But even world champions defer to the public religious dictates of the people who bankroll race teams, in this case the Moslems who made up — and still make up — the majority of the Williams backers.

Alan Jones was offered an incredible amount of money to race with Williams last season. A seven-figure incentive. He turned it down, firstly because he didn't enjoy driving the jolting, suspension-less cars of the day, and secondly because he wanted to improve his chances of not dying with his boots on.

Jones had his world title, his pile of money in the bank, his homes on three continents, his Simental bulls, his brace of luxury cars, his wife and little boy. He measured what he had with what he could get — which included a ride in the back of a hearse — and stayed at home on the farm. And who could blame him? Remember Jochen Rindt, Jimmy Clark, Ronnie Petersen, Patrick Depailler and, last year, Gilles Villeneuve and Riccardo Paletti . . .

Star drivers make more money in a 16-race season that some multi-national corporations. Others, at the bottom end of the ladder, pay to dice with death.

The face of Formula One has changed dramatically since the days of Juan Fangio and Jack Brabham. More and

GENTLEMEN

more drivers of the present day get in, make a pile, and get out . . . their attitude is that the longer you stay there, the greater the chances of copping it.

Not all the drivers, though, are cold, calculating machines. An over-riding passion for driving a race car at its limit is obvious in many, such as Frenchman Didier Pironi of Ferrari. He comfortably led last year's world championship when the parade settled on Hockenheim for the German GP. Pironi was dynamite in the qualifying and collared pole before the rains came; then the track was awash, visibility minimal. Few drivers ventured out. Pironi was one and, as usual, he was going hard . . . harder than the handful of other drivers by four seconds a lap. Travelling at around 240 km/h, Pironi moved to one side of the track to overtake a spray-obscured car ahead. What he failed to notice in the murk was a second slower car, Alain Prost's Renault, moving along at a mere 190 km/h.

The red car slammed into the right rear of the Renault, launching itself skywards nose-first, somersaulting twice in mid-air above Prost's cockpit before finally returning to earth with a shattering, sickening thud some 300 metres from the point of impact.

Pironi will recover, though he may not race again. Injuries to his right leg were so serious that amputation was a possibility for some weeks.

Why did he do it? Why did Pironi thumb his nose at the danger, given that it was an untimed (and therefore relatively unimportant) practice session, he was atop the championship table, and he had already clinched pole for the next day's grand prix?

He did it because he is a racer, like his former team-mate, the too-brave Gilles Villeneuve, who died in similar circumstances several months earlier.

Death hit the grand prix fraternity twice last season, claiming probably the most charismatic, entertaining driver of them all — Villeneuve — and a new chum yet to make his mark, Italian Riccardo Paletti, aged 23.

Tall, slender and bookish-looking, the bespectacled Paletti died when he ploughed into the rear of the stationary Ferrari of Pironi after it stalled on the grid at the Canadian Grand Prix. It was Paletti's second Formula One start.

The archetypal grand prix driver is a myth. There is no pattern to the current generation of Formula One men. A common thread, perhaps, is a desire to be the best.

The public image of a grand prix driver as a roisterer, all-night partier and all-round pants man lives on. The pit popsies still abound but most of the drivers have their regular gals or a wife to ward off the bed hoppers. Social activity goes on of course, but *after* the race. The demands of driving a modern Formula One machine don't sit with the old race era tales of the Marquis de Portago and Mike Hawthorn dancing the night away.

Niki Lauda, for instance, employs a full-time personal trainer to watch over his physical fitness and diet. Willi Dungl pushes Lauda through a daily regimen which includes running six to 10 kilometres daily, and works his charge's body with gymnastics and massage. A hamper of special food accompanies the two men in their travels.

Says Dungl: "We eat our own bread, made in Austria. We eat only biological food. It depends on the day. I measure the air temperature and the humidity and Niki's intake is adjusted accordingly. "In this way," explains Dungl, "I can control the amount he sweats, which is very important for racing."

Last year was Lauda's second time around in motor sport. He had retired from racing midway through practice for the Canadian Grand Prix in 1979. He was then 30 years old and he'd had enough. Racing bored him; there was no challenge. He went home to Austria and threw his energies into expanding Lauda Air. It worked . . . for a while.

Then came stories that his airline company was in deep financial trouble, that the taxman was owed $600,000. Late last year, Lauda found himself at the Donington circuit in England testing the new McLaren MP4-1. He had to borrow back from a friend an old helmet and overalls he'd given away years earlier as a souvenir.

Lauda was on the comback trail because he was broke, said some. Others said that he would not be so foolish as to be motivated merely by money. It was probably a combination of factors . . . there was the challenge of making it back to the top with a talented, yet untried, team. And there was the money, of course. A retainer of $2.5 million!

Lauda's fee was largely paid by a sponsor from his pre-comeback days, Parmalat, although the McLaren team operates with massive Marlboro backing. In return for its not inconsiderable commitment, Parmalat gets a cloth logo on Lauda's driving overalls, a decal on his helmet, and he wears a Parmalat cap all his waking hours. That's it, though — not even a sticker on the race car!

Lauda has never undersold his talents. He's never been backward coming forward with outstretched palm. "Motor racing," he was once quoted as saying," is a very professional game. A driver is stupid to race for one penny less then he can get. It is logical to ask for the maximum you can extract out of your situation. Not because I want the maximum, but because I want the situation.

"Why should I drive for less when I can drive for more? I do not hang on to a fee. I do not have a figure in my head and pursue that. Money is for living. Otherwise you have it and you still haven't lived."

Lauda has lived, and very nearly perished. Doctors will tell you he should have died following that fiery crack-up at the Nurburgring in 1976. The barbequed face and chewed-away right ear is Lauda's Nurburgring legacy. His badge of courage.

Looking at Lauda's battle scars is to understand why he would have no qualms, no conscience pangs, about pocketing his $2.5 million . . . At least Lauda still retains all his faculties, although he is never likely to be invited to do a Lux commercial for television.

Not so Clay Regazzoni, crippled in a crash at Long Beach in 1980. The veteran Swiss driver broke his spine in the accident; his legs are paralysed and the odds are against him walking again.

Two years of pain, of endless surgery, of being tethered to a hospital bed, have modified Regazzoni's interpretation of the life of the grand prix racer: "Frankly, I would rather be a nobody. I would rather renounce my whole past, all the satisfaction I've had out of motor racing, if I could be a normal human being today."

While the Niki Laudas and Keke Rosbergs and Alain Prosts are chased and feted by team bosses waving flush wallets, the other end of the grand prix grid is a different story. Here's where the rent-a-drivers, as they are scathingly referred to, are to be found . . . the rich kids with money to burn. Despite questionable talent, these men have the all-important commodity available to secure drives with one of the financially-strapped teams . . . Fittipaldi, Ensign, ATS, Osella, even the once-mighty Tyrrell.

> "I'd rather be a nobody and renounce my past, all the satisfaction I've had from racing, if I could be a normal human being today"

In 1981 this situation led to the absurdity of a Swedish pop drummer named Slim Borgudd sharing the same track as Alan Jones. Supergroup Abba tipped in a swag of money to buy Borgudd's seat with ATS, an erratic West German equipe bossed by a wheel manufacturer named Gunthar Schmidt.

Last year Chilean big spender Eliseo Salazar bought his way into a ride with ATS. Brazil's world champion Nelson Piquet is one driver who had reason to wish Eliseo and his money had stayed at home in the shadow of the Andes . . . Eliseo cost Piquet one probable grand prix victory in an incident that led to a well-publicised drop-kick and punch after the two climbed from their damaged racecars. This year it looks like poor down-at-heel Toleman will get the questionable services of Salazar. Toleman doesn't need Salazar, but it needs his money to pay for a good number one driver.

Not all the cash-up drivers are bums. Many started their Formula One careers by buying their place on a team, and then went on to confirm real ability. Elio de Angelis is one. With the wealthy family, the armed bodyguards to keep the Red Brigades at bay and the dark Latin looks, De Angelis has battled with the spoiled brat tag throughout most of his four-year span in Formula One. He could number few admirers among his peers.

His struggle for acceptance ended last year when he broke a long drought for Lotus and won his first-ever grand prix, beating Keke Rosberg in the Austrian GP.

Surprisingly, considering his personal fortune, de Angelis also haggles hard over his annual retainer: "Money represents the value that other people place on your ability," he says. So it's not the money that counts, but the size of the fee in relation to that paid to other star drivers. My goal is not to spend money; it is to win races. That's all that really interests me."

Brazilian Emerson Fittipaldi won his world championships in the early 1970s, at a time when driving skill and winning were more closely related than in the high-tech 1980s. And at a time when million dollar retainers were unheard of.

Fittipaldi, in later years right up to his retirement in 1981, struggled to find the key to continuing success. It never came, although he strongly denies he was guilty of not driving as hard as in days of old. "With the modern cars it is difficult to tell how hard a driver is trying. If the car is not working well he might be trying harder than he has ever done and still fail to qualify."

Fittipaldi remembers Monaco in 1980. With just 30 minutes remaining of official qualifying, he hadn't gone fast enough to make the race. "I sat in the pit lane for a few minutes and thought about all the points where I could drive over the limit to gain a few hundredths of a second and yet not have a bad crash if I went off the track. Then I went out and drove harder then than I think I have ever done in my career. I brushed the guard rails in a dozen places and managed to qualify the car into the race at the back of the grid. But probably nobody even noticed how hard I had to drive to do that."

Fittipaldi doesn't say as much but his

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GENTLEMEN

eyes suggest he longs for the return of the old days in Formula One, before Colin Chapman dreamed up "ground effects" and turned grand prix design upside down.

Niki Lauda was away from a Formula One machine for two years. He couldn't believe how the cars had changed in that time. He had exited from the grand prix stage just as the ground effects cars were beginning to evolve. He returned to race a state-of-the-art ground hugger, a car that cornered like it was on rails, exerting painful G-forces on the driver's neck muscles. In the old days Lauda could grip the steering wheel with a feather touch, with the thumb and forefinger feeling out the car and the track. He came back to a car that needed to be muscled with a vice-like stranglehold. And the downforce of the design made the steering so heavy. Suspension was non-existent. Every ripple, every blemish in the track surface was transmitted to the driver's tailbone, and along his backbone; the body was now expected to soak up the bumps, taking the job once handled by the race car.

The cars of the last two seasons didn't do much for the health of the men who drove them. All have complained about neck and back problems; some wore neck braces in order to combat the Gs.

Patrick Tambay of Ferrari was forced to miss several races because of a pinched nerve in his neck. At Rio for the Brazilian GP early in 1982, winner Nelson Piquet collapsed with exhaustion on the rostrum. His teammate Riccardo Patrese didn't get quite that far . . . he retired mid-race after blacking out and spinning his Brabham.

Uncomfortable, unsafe and not satisfying to drive . . . even unspectacular to watch regardless of the record lap speeds set with clockwork regularity at each circuit; that was the Formula One car of the recent past.

Such have been the amazing cornering speeds that the grand prix car of 1982 had outgrown just about every racetrack in the world, including France's Paul Ricard, said to be the safest anywhere. Jochen Mass' March made it into the crowd, injuring 10, during the French Grand Prix . . .

Formula One racing of the 1980s has become a manufacturers' playpen with technological innovations — not driver ability — making the pace. A new turbo engine or latest compound tyre can rip a second or two from a lap time; replace a driver of dubious talent with a superstar and the result is a saving of perhaps a tenth of a second or two.

The logical solution to the problems of too-fast race cars, dangerous race cars and race cars which didn't sufficiently reflect the skill of the men driving them was to change the complex technical regulations.

To fully appreciate the complexity of the problem it helps to understand the grand prix infra-structure. There are maybe 18 teams involving some 30 drivers. They range from the huge State-owned giants like Renault down to struggling Ensign. Renault has developed its own turbo-charged engines; Ensign and other kit-car teams like it use the ubiquitous Ford-Cosworth.

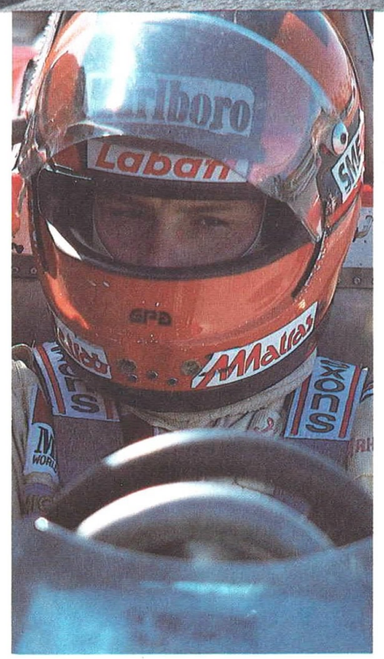
The Cosworths have reigned supreme in Formula One for more than a decade, but the writing is on the wall . . . turbo power is taking over. The difficulty for Ensign and Fittipaldi and ATS and Theodore and Osella and some other Cosworth users is two-fold . . . their bank account won't allow them to scrap their existing engines, and there is no guarantee of them finding a source of turbo engines.

However, if the rules could be changed to extend the competitive life of the Cosworths . . .

So, you have two factions — the turbo camps and the non-turbo. Both with vested interests.

The real power in Formula Once is divided between two men. One, representing the Formula One Constructors' Association (FOCA) is gnome-like Englishman Ecclestone. And in the blue corner, usually begging to differ, is the tall, autocratic Frenchman Jean-Marie Balestre, president of the Federation Internationale du Sport Automobile (FISA).

FISA's responsibility is to frame and implement Formula One regulations, leaving FOCA to take care of the business side of grand prix racing. Simple . . . in theory. But endless bickering, threats, protests, confrontations and strikes suggest it hasn't been a perfect working relationship. Balestre's ham-fisted attempts to force his dictates on the mainly-British teams that are the mainstay of FOCA has been the test of the problem. It comes back to money and vested interests. Balestre has on occasions aligned himself all too closely with Renault and also appears to harbor an unhealthy penchant to see a Frenchman win a world championship.



The desperate need to alter the direction of Formula One — and the failure of those who control it to reach harmony — has taken grand prix racing to the brink in recent times. Races have been cancelled or partly boycotted, as was the case in last year's San Marino Grand Prix when FOCA teams stayed at home in protest at not getting their way over a questionable weight rule.

In this unhappy dissonent environment, an amazing between-season round table has seen the unbelievable take place — the warring parties have reached agreement, or part agreement, on the introduction of a new set of technical regulations for the coming season.

In a bold move taken to slow — nay, reverse — racecar evolution, FISA has insisted on a number of radical rule changes designed to slow cornering speeds, improve driver and spectator safety, and also give the aging Cosworths a new lease of life.

Underbottoms of the '83 grand prix cars must be flat . . . no more depressions which, in tandem with sliding skirts, allow the creation of ground effects. Now, too, the sliding skirts are no more; in fact no part of the car may touch the track surface. The size of the rear wings has been reduced to lower downforce. Protection for the driver's feet — a survival cell forward of the front wheels — has been increased from 30cm to 50cm. There's also a new weight regulation — cars can tip the scales at a 540 kg minimum with fuel aboard.

Four-wheel drive grand prix cars, and those with more than four wheels, are banned . . . that puts the Williams six-wheeler right out of business.

The constructers and designers, predictably, were not overjoyed at the rule-changing binge. Time was the problem . . . getting brand new race cars from the drawing board to the track is their biggest headache. But they've accepted the edicts and there will be no strikes or boycotts . . .

So what will the new rules bring to Formula One? Alan Jones is predicting record straight-line speeds from new, ultra-slim projectiles. But, he says, the cars will not have the same grip as the ground effects machines and therefore will be slower through the turns. The rigid, unsprung missiles of last year will make way for the return of properly-sprung suspensions and drivers who've suffered two years of jarring pain and discomfort can smile again.

The dramatic rule changes may alter the pecking order in Formula One. The most successful team in 1982 was Ferrari, thanks to the reliability of its powerful V6 turbo, and the skill of its drivers. This year Frenchman Rene Arnoux, of the saucer eyes and pole-winning ways, joins the Italian team. Under the old rules he would be the logical choice to capture the world title. Now . . . who knows?

Australia won't host a round of the world championship this year. But maybe in 1984. A handful of venues have been thrust forward but only one has real prospects: Melbourne International Raceway (nee Calder).

Others, like Sandown Park and Canberra and Sydney-through-the-streets have their supporters, but most require a government handout. Bob Jane has already announced he is building a grand prix circuit and that the money will be coming from his own pocket. It's tough to argue against that no-nonsense style. Jane is a rich man. He'll need to be when he starts paying bills for a world championship round. Big bucks are required to stage a grand prix . . . he has figured on a $2 million dollars budget for each of the three years he is committed to a Formula One race. A large slice of that two million would go to the airlines . . . flying in 30 race cars plus the associated gear, accompanied by at least 200 personnel won't be cheap. And then there are the prize-money, publicity and administration expenses and the myriad of assorted outgoings.

Melbourne International Raceway is already in existence. That's a start, and extensions estimated to cost $3.1 million are now underway. The outcome will be a specialised grand prix track of 3.7 kilometres designed to allow 197 km/h lap averages with a terminal straight line speed of 330 km/h.

Jane won't get any revenue back from television rights. Bernie Ecclestone and FOCA have the TV tied up tighter than a driver's safety harness. But there is plenty of local interest in real grands prix.

Jane must be encouraged by Channel Nine's continuing strong ratings for its live grand prix telecasts. They rate as high as a five (when opposition channels are scoring ones and even zeroes). And despite the high costs of satellite transmissions — about five grand an hour — Nine is in no danger of dropping its grand prix coverage.

Solid rating figures might have been anticipated in 1981, the year of Alan Jones' reign as world champion. Interestingly, though, the viewing audience didn't fall off in 1982 when Jones had departed the scene, leaving no Aussie representation in Formula One.

Will the Norms struggle out of their loungeroom chairs and pay good money at the gate for the real thing? Bob Jane is gambling a few million bucks that they will.

PENTHOUSE INTERVIEW

CARLOTTA

> I think women have got it tough. I sometimes think I would have had it easier if I'd stayed male. But I like being treated like a lady.

With a 20-year record of sequin-spattered shows behind it, Les Girls, the Kings Cross based all-male revue, has become an Australian institution. The troupe's recent tours across the country have boosted both its popularity and its notoriety. Carlotta — compere, producer, choreographer and costume designer — is the star of the show. She's been a regular member of the Les Girls cast of female impersonators since the revue's inception two decades ago.

But as one of Australia's first and most famous trans-sexuals, Carlotta is the odd woman out among the boys at Les Girls. She underwent her sex-change operation in a Sydney hospital 10 years ago at the age of 29.

The medical conglomeration which created treatment and the technology allowing anatomical sex conversions has received a remarkably rapid acceptance in the western world. What was only a few years ago considered by many to be a dangerous and illicit operation, carried out in backyard surgeries in remote, exotic locations like Casablanca, is now a socially accepted practice, often government-sponsored under the category of "corrective surgery".

That description implies that the surgeon is repairing a mistake made by mother nature: that corrective surgery is setting right a chromosomatic error which has resulted in a female psyche being trapped in a male body. The public was first made aware of the subject with the transformation of Christine (George) Jorgensen, who was trans-sexed by a team of Danish doctors in 1952. Trans-sexual operations were surgically possible as far back as the 1930s, but they were not refined or made public until the Fifties.

The decision by the American John Hopkins University to specialise in trans-sexual surgery gave further credibility to the operation, and thousands have been performed all over the world since then. Medical procedures usually begin with the administration of female hormones — estrogen and progesterone. The next step is surgery — castration, plastic reconstruction and the formation of an artificial vagina using the sensitive skin from the penis and scrotum.

The tran-sexual experience was first revealed through the Jorgensen case, but there have been a number of celebrated trans-sexuals ready to promote the cause since then. Author Jan Morris lived an active and athletic life as James Morris until her sex change operation at the age of 47. More recently, British model April Ashley and tennis player Rene Richards have brought trans-sexualism into the public eye.

But despite the publicity surrounding their operations, trans-sexuals are, for the most part, a misunderstood group. Many people find it difficult to comprehend their motives. Morris, a prolific author, sums up the dilemma succinctly when she distinguishes between the transvestite, who has a social problem, the homosexual, who has a sexual problem, and the trans-sexual, who has a gender problem. "Trans-sexualism, in its classic sense, is as distinct from transvestitism as it is from homosexuality. The transvestite gets his gratification specifically from wearing the clothes of the opposite sex, and would not sacrifice his pleasure by joining that sex. The homosexual, by definition, prefers to make love with others of his own sort and would only alienate himself and them by changing. Trans-sexualism is something different in kind. It is not a sexual mode or preference. It is not an act of sex at all. It is a passionate, lifelong, ineradicable conviction."

Carlotta's conviction about the true nature of her gender developed before she reached her teens. She grew up and went to school in the inner-Sydney suburb of Balmain, where she now owns her own home. She says she was blessed with understanding parents and friends who helped her avoid the confusion, alienation and trauma which most trans-sexuals suffer through their youth.

Entrepreneur Lee Gordon noted her talents when she was still a teenage boy dressing as a girl on weekends. Gordon offered Carlotta a role in the original Les Girls cast and she's been with the show ever since. Carlotta's lengthy commitment to the revue has earned her the nickname "The Legend" among the "girls" in the Les Girls dressing room, and her talents have been noticed by producers who have offered her parts in television and on film. These days she's a busy lady, doing two shows a night and filling her days with costume design projects for other Sydney revues. "I'm a workaholic," she says. "That's what keeps me contented. I have an inner

Photograph by Lorrie Graham

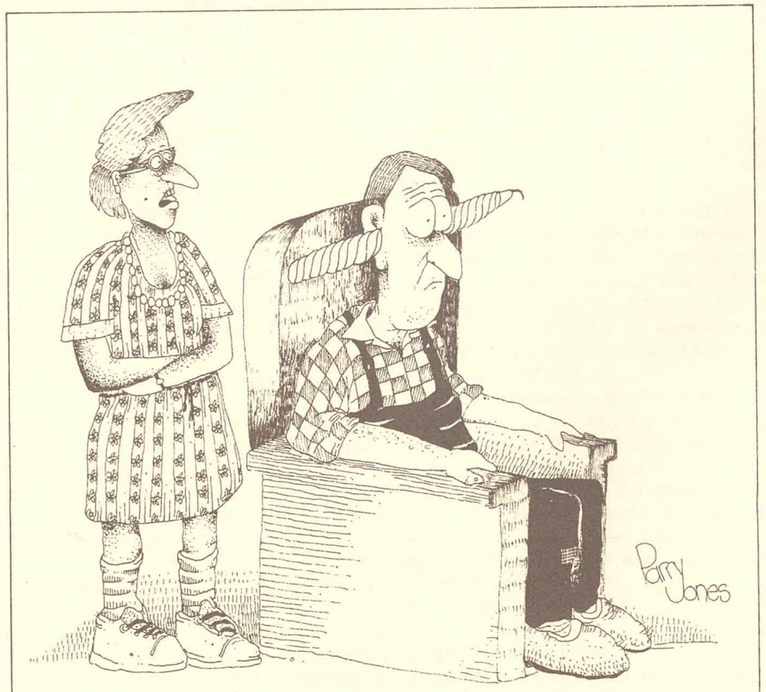
happiness. I'm not worried about aging and I will never have a facelift."

The walls at Les Girls are lined with photos of the stars of the show. Naturally, Carlotta features in a variety of roles, with one particularly startling shot standing out — a John Wady photo of Carlotta posing as Marilyn Monroe and displaying an uncanny likeness to the Hollywood star. As well as the Rough Trade, Faggot's Finger, Bog Buster and Silicon Tits on the cocktail menu at the bar, there is a drink called the Carlotta ("20 years in the making"). When the lady herself appears on stage to compere the show, she soon reveals the professional approach she's developed over those two decades as the queen of one of the world's best all-male revues.

Whether it be a Saturday night show with a full house of middle-aged, middle-class Australians, tourists and a sprinkling of minor celebrities, or a slow Thursday with only the first few tables in the club filled with suburbanites off the Sydney By Night bus tour on their annual big night out, Carlotta gives them a guaranteed good time.

She projects — with her 38" bust and some snappy "risque but not rude" dialogue to get the audience in the mood. "Don't get our show confused with the strip clubs," warns Carlotta. "They are all tits and pussy. Here you'll find it's all tits and balls. The strippers may have measurements of 36-24-36, but here they measure 36-24-36-11½." . . . and it's on with the show, a fast-paced mixture of comedy and mimed routines which include a range of contemporary and music hall numbers, and just about every style in between.

Penthouse features editor Phil Abraham admitted to some reservations about interviewing Carlotta. But his doubts were dispelled after their initial meeting. "Carlotta belies the cliched image of the vain, hysterical, terminally affected queen. She quickly rid me of those preconceptions. Behind her dramatic presence is an elegant and sincere woman who handles herself with modesty and natural wit and humor. Carlotta may once have been a male," says Abraham, "but regardless of the surgical transformation, she is a real lady."



"Oh, I wish you would see a doctor, George. That wax in your ears is just making you miserable."

Penthouse: Were you pretty when you were a boy?
Carlotta: Yes, I was always pretty. People used to say to me, "You should have been a girl" or "You are a girl." Most guys go straight up and down — but I had a waist. And I had girly legs.
Penthouse: How did you get such a great set of tits?
Carlotta: They're natural. Some girls get silicone implants, while others develop their breasts with hormone therapy. I had hormone therapy for 10 years before I had my operation. They were injected under a doctor's care. I still take them.
Penthouse: What effect did they have on your body?
Carlotta: They developed all my female characteristics — my hips and my breasts. They give you a softer look. But you have to have that feminine look about you in the first place, if they are going to work. You can't just take a wharfie off the docks and feed him hormones and expect to make him look like a lady.
Penthouse: In her book *Conundrum,* Jan Morris, a trans-sexual writer, describes the moment when she first knew that she was a female trapped in a male body. She said it occurred when she was a child, sitting underneath a piano upon which her mother was playing Sibelius. Can you remember a similar moment of self-realisation in your youth?
Carlotta: Yes, I can distinctly remember one Christmas when I guess I would have been seven years old. I was given a train set as a present, and the girl next door received a bride doll. I was furious . . . I wanted the doll.
Penthouse: Some social theorists who have considered the trans-sexual dilemma say the predicament results from a family situation in which they have a dominant mother and an absent father . . . how does that concept relate to your situation?
Carlotta: It might work that way in some cases, but certainly not in mine. I grew up in a family full of boys — there were six of them — and my parents have always been wonderful.
Penthouse: These social theorists also claim the trans-sexual's childhood and teens are often lonely and frustrating times.
Carlotta: Yes, I tended to be frustrated. I didn't know which way my life was going to go. But I've been much luckier than many others in my situation. Some have terrible problems when their parents fail to accept that they want to change. That parental rejection can result in some terribly traumatic scenes. But as I said, my parents have always been particularly understanding. And in my case, it was always obvious that I should have been a girl.
Penthouse: When did you start dressing as a woman?
Carlotta: We're really going through the archives now, aren't we? I suppose I began dressing like a girl when I was 16. I dressed normally as a boy at school, where I used to get ridiculed a bit because I looked like a girl. But on the weekends and at parties I wore girls' clothes. It was fun . . . I enjoyed it.
Penthouse: Did that ever result in any problems?
Carlotta: On the contrary, it opened up a lot of new opportunities for me. I once won the national twist competition as a boy and as a girl.
Penthouse: How did you manage that?
Carlotta: I was teaching the twist at the old Peppermint Twist Lounge, when the dance was really popular. Chubby Checker came out and we used to run competitions. At one national event I twisted as a girl with a guy as a partner, and then I came back dressed as a guy and won the male division too. And the organisers thought it was two different people. It was a big laugh.
Penthouse: Why did you decide to call yourself Carlotta?
Carlotta: That was Lee Gordon's idea. Lee called me that. He ran the Peppermint Lounge and we were really good friends. Lee was married to a lovely girl who was a showgirl at the Latin Quarter, and I was really good friends with them both. Lee was like a father figure to me. He was the Svengali of the Australian showbusiness scene. If you had the talent, he could mould it.
Penthouse: Have you modelled your look on anyone in particular over the years?
Carlotta: No, not really, but a lot of people have told me that I look like Faye Dunaway.
Penthouse: Which women do you admire?
Carlotta: I like Jacqueline Bisset's looks . . . she's just horny. Catherine Deneuve is particularly beautiful, and I admire Sophia Loren for the way she has hung on to her beauty. I liked her statement about looking forward to getting lines, because they add character to your face.
Penthouse: What about men?
Carlotta: I like real men . . . Ryan O'Neal, Robert Redford, Paul Newman. And I don't think most Australian men deserve the abusive "ocker" tag which they are given. Most of the Australian men I meet are quite sophisticated . . . they rate with any other men in the world.
Penthouse: Do you accept the traditional female role of subservience to males?
Carlotta: Yes, definitely. I think the man should always be dominant.
Penthouse: What do you like most about being a woman?
Carlotta: Actually, I think women have got it tough. I sometimes think I would have had it easier if I'd stayed male. I work like a dog. But I guess if I have to say what I like most about being female it is being treated like a lady.
Penthouse: It is a little ironic that in the era in which sex change surgery became available, allowing males to adopt feminine characteristics, the feminist movement boomed, and many women renounced their femininity. What is your attitude towards the woman's movement?
Carlotta: I think some of those girls have gone a bit too far. There are some very feminine girls who are feminists and there are some who aren't. They've gone to extremes. They won't wear make-up anymore or let guys open cab doors for them. They may as well put pants on and be blokes. I have a lot of admiration for the women who are making it in a man's world . . . in business. I've got nothing against feminists. Germaine Greer is one of my friends. I haven't seen her for years, but she always said she'd like to do a book about me one day.
Penthouse: Have you ever considered what you would have done with your life if you had been born earlier in the century, or in any other period in which corrective surgery was not available?
Carlotta: No, I've never really considered that . . . but I've always been conscious of just how lucky I've been.
Penthouse: As one of the first and most famous ladies to have corrective surgery in this country, do you find others in a similar predicament come to you for advice?
Carlotta: Yes, they come to me all the time.
Penthouse: What sort of advice do you give them?
Carlotta: I tell them it's something they've got to decide for themselves. I can reassure them, but I would never offer an opinion on whether or not they should undergo surgery. That is a job for the doctors and psychiatrists who have been trained to assess them.
Penthouse: Why did you wait until you were 29 before you had corrective surgery?
Carlotta: It was a personal decision. I think, on looking back, that it was fortunate that I waited. By the time you get to that age, you are a much more stable and sensible individual. You have a well-developed set of values and you know what you want out of life.
Penthouse: What sort of tests did you have before your operation?
Carlotta: I talked with psychiatrists and had a variety of medical tests, which showed that I had more female chromosomes than male ones. And the psychiatrists were convinced that I was a woman. I had never had any difficulty adopting a female role. But let's put it this way — I was never a homosexual. I've got nothing against them, I think they're great. But I was never oriented that way. When I was a boy I did not have sex with other boys. I didn't have

"Yes, Fifi, I feel duty-bound to fulfill my election promise of cleaning up corruption."

sex with girls either. At that stage of my life I just was not interested in sex. It's difficult to remember my exact attitude to sex, it was so long ago, but I do know that I was preoccupied with other things — painting, clothes and going out to shows — at that stage. Anyway, after I had undergone all those tests, corrective surgery was advised.

Penthouse: Did you understand the details involved in the operation?

Carlotta: I don't know what they did. All I know is they gave me a vagina, which works just like any other woman's except I don't have periods.

Penthouse: Can you experience orgasm?

Carlotta: Yes, sexual things are normal. Men just think of me as a woman.

Penthouse: Does the fact you don't suffer through the menstrual cycle make you feel superior to other women?

Carlotta: No darling, I can get headaches too.

Penthouse: Have you ever had a desire to have children?

Carlotta: Yes, of course. I would have loved to have had kids. But I've left it a little too late to adopt.

Penthouse: Have you had any other surgery since that initial operation?

Carlotta: No, there has been nothing since. I have never had facial surgery or electrolysis. I have never had hair on my face. My voice is natural, it was always a little husky, and I have never had need for speech therapy.

Penthouse: Have you ever had any legal problems resulting from your change of gender?

Carlotta: No, never. I've always had a good name. Most people know me. I've never been hassled. I've always been Carlotta and that's it. And I've been around Les Girls for so long they all call me "Mum".

Penthouse: You've been with the show for decades. How did it get off the ground?

Carlotta: It started about 20 years ago, over the road from where we are located now, at a place called The Jewellery Box. Lee Gordon returned from Paris, where he had seen a revue featuring female impersonators, and he decided to do one here. Sammy Lee took it over when Lee died.

Carlotta: At first, Les Girls had a reputation as a meeting place for gays. How did the place shrug off that image?

Carlotta: It had that tag, but it never really was a homosexual rendevous. A television show called *The Glittering Mile*, which featured Les Girls, opened the general public's eye to its potential as entertainment. It skyrocketed after that and Les Girls has never looked back. We've now got four companies, this and three travelling shows, which go all over the country from Darwin to Bourke. I'm just about to leave on a tour of New Zealand and then we might be going on to South Africa and Europe.

Penthouse: Why is the show so successful?

Carlotta: Because it's aimed at an audience of mums and dads, and we've created a humorous format for them. And it's got that Las Vegas touch . . . a lot of glamor. We spend a lot of money on the costumes.

Penthouse: How did you first get involved in the show?

Carlotta: At the time I was making costumes for strippers. Lee Gordon got me involved. He said I'd look really good doing this sort of work and I've been here ever since.

Penthouse: You seem to be keen on audience participation. How do you get them involved?

Carlotta: Yes, we do a lot of that. One of the things I do is get three couples up on stage for a sort of competition, where the girls have to push a ping-pong ball up one of their partner's trouser legs and then down the other side, and then run across the stage and put it in a bucket. Then when they've finished doing that, which is hysterical, I swap them around, so the guys have got another man's wife pushing a ping pong ball up his leg. It always goes over well, and we do similar stunts . . . dressing guys from the audience up as girls and getting them to do the can-can.

Penthouse: What sort of people make up a typical audience at Les Girls?

Carlotta: During the week we get mainly mums and dads. Then on weekends, a lot of tourists come to see the show . . . New Zealanders and Japanese and Americans. On Friday nights the place is chock-a-block with hen's parties — girls celebrating the fact that they're getting married. On Saturday nights we get a mixture of young and old. And we get quite a few celebrities up here. The Platters were in here the other night. We've had Shirley Bassey up here, and Danny La Rue, to name just a few.

Penthouse: How do they react to the sexual aspect of the show, the fact that the performers are female impersonators?

Carlotta: I'm sure most of them come along out of curiosity. But I usually satisfy them pretty quickly. I tell the guys in the audience to just remember that the performers have got their mothers' features but their fathers' fixtures. A lot of the audience's eyes never leave the girls' crotches or tits or whatever.

Penthouse: Do you ever get any negative responses from naive audience members?

Carlotta: No, it's surprising. You might get a drunk causing an incident. Every show has to put up with that sort of thing. And of course, there are quite a few people who absolutely refuse to believe the performers are boys, no matter how hard you try to convince them.

Penthouse: Some of the world's top female impersonators have done their apprenticeships at Les Girls. Who have been some of the more memorable characters to share the limelight with you?

Carlotta: A few have finished as very successful strippers in Europe, but perhaps the most successful of all is Holly Brown, who has developed a brilliantly versatile club act. She does impressions and a variety of entertainments. Holly is really very good.

Penthouse: When you audition guys for parts in the Les Girls show, what sort of things do you look for?

Carlotta: Looks come first. They've got to look like women. In fact, they've got to be more feminine than a woman . . . larger than life. Then they've got to have talent.

Penthouse: What have been your more memorable roles?

Carlotta: I did a Barbarella strip act that was very popular . . . and one of the things I most enjoyed doing . . . it was years ago . . . down at Chequers nightclub. I did a support act with the girl who played Nancy in *Oliver Twist*. I was a nude showgirl amongst a host of real show girls. For me, at that stage of my life, it was a real achievement.

Penthouse: Les Girls costumes are particularly lavish. What are you aiming to do when you design them?

Carlotta: I want to make every woman in the audience go: "Oh, I'd like to be in that."

Penthouse: Are you a hard taskmaster — do you wield the whip at rehearsals?

Carlotta: Yes, I give them a hard time. I'm a Virgo, love, a screamer.

Penthouse: How do they respond?

Carlotta: They call me "Mum". They know who's boss.

Penthouse: What has been the most gratifying response you've ever received from an audience?

Carlotta: Opening nights are the best. You finally see the results of your efforts. And for me, someone saying thank-you for that effort, with flowers or words, is more gratifying than any sort of adulation from an audience.

Penthouse: How does Les Girls compare with other revues of its type in other countries?

Carlotta: We are the biggest and the best.

Penthouse: Have you ever had any competition in Sydney?

Carlotta: Not really. Capriccios in Oxford Street had a similar drag revue, until it burnt down. It will be reopening next year. But we aren't really competing. It caters more for the camp crowd. Their show is more bizarre and high camp than ours. Actually they're very clever . . . but they cater for a younger set . . . they go over the mums and dads' heads.

Penthouse: Places like Capriccios seem to come and go fairly rapidly in this area, burning down or closing down . . . Les Girls and Carlotta have survived through a number of generations in the Cross. Have you noticed many changes in the place over those years?

Carlotta: Many things have changed. When I first working here, over 20 years ago, this was a cosmopolitan area, with open-air cafes and ethnic groups. There were no sex shops. But the scene changed during the Vietnam War, when the area was inundated with soldiers on leave. Fast buck places opened up all over the area and cheapened it a bit. The Cross is getting back to the way it used to be. The girls have always been there and they always will. And so they should; I'm a great believer in legalisation of prostitution.

Penthouse: The strip shows changed during the R and R era too. Do you think they're as good as they used to be?

Carlotta: No, I don't think they're as well done as they were. The Pink Panther is the best . . . they do some big productions. But there is nothing to compare with the Pink Pussy Cat, the original one. They brought the top strippers out from overseas.

Penthouse: What other shows have you been involved in apart from your work with Les Girls?

Carlotta: Some of the television parts have been memorable. I played Arnold Feather's girlfriend in the *Number 96* serial. Arnold really freaked out at the end when he found out who I was. I've also appeared in a number of films — *Alvin Purple* and *The Naked Bunyip* — and made a movie last year called *Dead End*, in which I played the owner of a nightclub. She does a song in the film called You Only Live Once and comes to a horrible end.

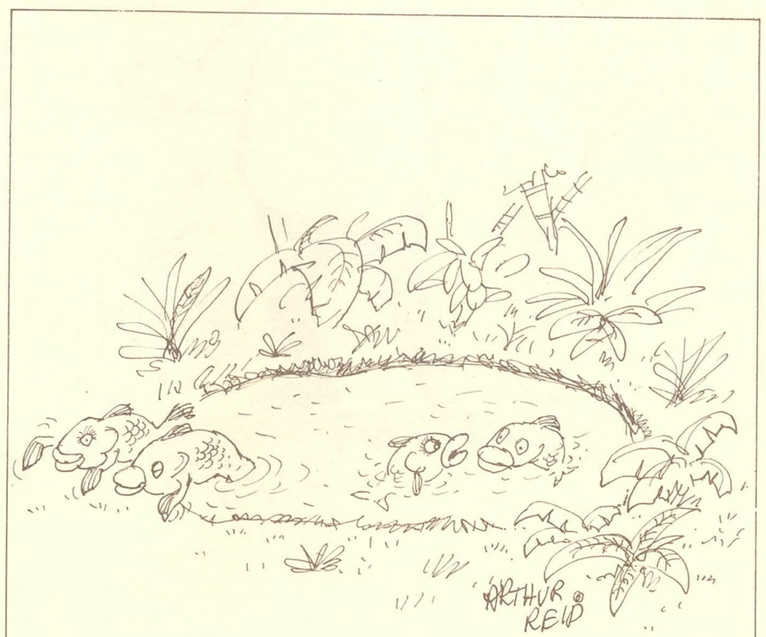
Penthouse: Did you find adapting from stage work to the camera an easy transition?

Carlotta: Yes, I didn't have any problems. Directors are wonderful. They talk to you before you do your bit, they relax you. Some people freeze in front of a camera. It just came naturally to me, maybe because I'm such a ham.

Penthouse: What are your plans for the future?

Carlotta: I don't think that is something you can plan. I just want to be happy. I know I'll be at Les Girls for a little while longer . . . it's an income, and it's a home.

"I'm sorry sir, but your blood group has been discontinued."

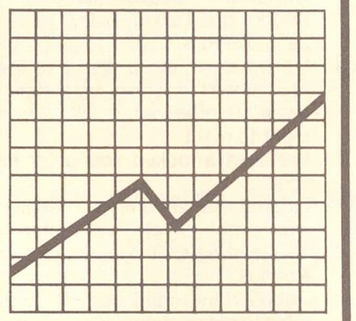


"The Jones's have evolved eggs"

"He doesn't suffer fools gladly."

PENTHOUSE PSYCHOGRAPH

DO YOU FIT THE MOULD?



Are you walking around in the wrong body? Do you have a fat man's mind lurking within the body of an athlete, or a poet's brain imprisoned in a body that really belongs to the Incredible Hulk?

Take this psychograph and you'll find out.

During the past few decades psychologists have discovered that many popular cliches pertaining to physique and personality seem to have a substantial basis in fact. Skinny, birdlike guys really are more likely to be nervous and jumpy, while chubby types do indeed tend to be jolly bon vivants.

If you've ever sat through a course in basic psychology, you've probably heard about endomorphs, mesomorphs, and ectomorphs. And if you haven't that's okay, because you're going to hear about them now. These terms apply to the three basic types of people. Endomorphs are your roly-poly, good-natured fat slobs; mesomorphs are well muscled, dependable go-getters; ectomorphs are thin and intense, with a marked tendency to be brainy and weird.

Obviously, not everybody falls precisely into one of these three categories. Most people, in fact, are a blend of all of them. Nevertheless, while you may exhibit traits from all three categories, one type is likely to predominate. This quiz can give you an idea of which temperamental category you fall into and of whether or not your temperament matches the physique generally associated with it.

The pioneer in this field of psychological research was William Sheldon, whose principal findings were published during the 1940s and early 1950s. Sheldon, a medical doctor as well as a Ph D psychologist, spent his life studying the personality traits and anatomies of 45,000 men. He poked and probed these guys, barraging them with mental tests and measuring everything from the size of their genitals to the shape of their feet. By carefully comparing, categorising and correlating his data, Sheldon discovered that there seem to be three basic body types and that each of them tends to go hand in hand with a distinct set of personality traits.

No one is quite sure why the shape of one's body seems to be so profoundly linked with the temperament of one's mind. There may be some deeply buried genetic influence, but it's also possible that simple parental behavior could be the determining factor. (After all, if you were a parent, wouldn't you probably treat a pudgy, happy-go-lucky baby differently from a scrawny, high-strung one?)

Recent studies also hint that we aren't completely at the mercy of the body type we're born with or its associated temperament. We can — through exercise and/or diet — alter our physique to a considerable degree. Interestingly, when this happens, our temperament is likely to change as well, reflecting traits associated with the newly acquired body type. One study, for instance, found that men who jogged regularly for six months became more assertive and self-confident. In short, as their physiques became more muscled and athletic (mesomorphic), their minds also took on the typical characteristics of the mesomorph.

It's extremely important on this psychograph to answer the questions with rigorous honesty. On all the items in the three sections below, give yourself (in the margin) *five points* if the statement applies *very strongly* to you; *four points* if it applies *quite a bit; three points* if it applies *somewhat* or *moderately; two points* if it applies *only a little;* and *one point* if it *never (or almost never)* applies to you.

PART ONE

1. When I sit down, I usually assume a relaxed posture; I'll sprawl all over a chair rather than sit up straight.
2. I like a soft life; whenever possible I surround myself with things that give me the maximum physical comfort.
3. I'm relatively slow to react both physically and mentally. You won't, for example, find me bursting into anger over some little thing. Nor will you find me excelling in sports that require quick reactions.
4. Eating is one of my favorite pastimes.
5. I especially value dining out and eating with friends.
6. After a good meal, I like to just sit back and relax. The idea of eating and then doing something else — like going to the movies or the theatre — doesn't appeal to me very much.
7. I like tradition, manners, and ceremony. Given the choice, I'll always select white tie and tails over blue jeans.
8. I love having lots of people around.
9. I have a strong need to be loved. I get very uncomfortable when I feel people don't approve of me.
10. I have a relatively placid, even personality. I don't experience violent swings of emotion.
11. I have very few sleep problems. I sleep deeply and easily.
12. When I drink, I usually become even more relaxed than I normally am.
13. When I feel depressed or anxious, I like to talk about it with other people; that's when you need them the most.
14. I have quite strong ties with my family, and I remember my childhood as an enjoyable time.
15. I believe you should live and let live. There's no need to get upset about other people's lives or to try and change them.

PART TWO

1. If you saw me walking down the street, you could tell I'm someone with drive and purpose.
2. I love taking chances. I'll do anything that smacks of risk and adventure.
3. If I don't get regular, strenuous exercise, I begin feeling frustrated and out of sorts.
4. I'm a tough-minded person. Other people's problems don't really interest me.
5. I don't like feeling hemmed in. Cramped, closed-in spaces or situations make me feel claustrophobic.
6. I'm extremely competitive.
7. I'm able to endure pain quite well. I don't think I feel pain as much as some people do.
8. I wouldn't mind doing "cruel" jobs that others didn't want to do. I would, for example, be a good hatchet man for a large corporation whose job was to fire people. Somebody has to do it, and I like the feeling of control and power.
9. I talk loudly and forcefully.
10. I've always looked old for my age.
11. When I get up in the morning, I feel strong and ready to meet the day's challenges.
12. When I drink, I tend to get loud and aggressive.
13. When I feel depressed or anxious, I go out and *do* something.
14. I believe you should come out and say what you mean. Too many people beat around the bush and are afraid to say what they really think.
15. I've always tried to live up to the goals and objectives I set for myself when I was young.

PART THREE

1. Privacy is extremely important to me.
2. My movements and posture are generally constrained. When I sit in a chair, I sit up straight.
3. I don't like schedules and routines. To other people, my life probably looks disorganised.
4. I'd often prefer staying home to going out to any other place I can think of.
5. I worry a lot.
6. My moods are unpredictable. One minute I can be happy, the next minute I'm sad.
7. I don't often raise my voice and I like a quiet environment.
8. I'm not good at meeting people. I get extremely nervous and withdrawn in social situations.
9. I'm not good about pain. I'm very sensitive to it.
10. I often don't sleep well and feel tired when I'm awake. My sleeping schedule often varies wildly from night to night.
11. I've always looked young for my age.
12. I don't like sharing my feelings with other people. I'd prefer to be alone when I'm depressed or anxious.
13. I don't think childhood is something to get nostalgic about. I think I'll enjoy my older years more than my younger ones.
14. I'd hate living in a place that was sunny all the time. I actually enjoy wet, grey weather.
15. I don't particularly like to drink. Drugs of all types don't interest me much.

SCORING AND INTERPRETATION

Your overall score isn't important. What you want to find out is *which of the three parts you scored highest on.*

• If you scored highest on Part One, you have a temperament normally associated with endomorphs. You are likely to be a lover of life: someone who values freedom and who takes things one day at a time. You're probably a strong believer in the maxim. "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die." (In fact, the extraordinary pleasure you take in living may imbue you with a stronger-than-average fear of death.)

Sexually, you may be less active than other men. This doesn't mean you're impotent, sterile, or a closet queen. It just means you tend to value other comforts and pleasures more.

Men in this category are likely to have rounded bodies and a tendency toward fat. Even when they're not overweight, they give the impression of being good-natured pudgies.

• If you scored highest on Part Two, you are likely to be a mesomorph. The theoretical "average man" comes from this category. Physiques tend to be hard, strong, and powerful. When these guys get fat, they look chunky, not chubby.

Mesomorphs believe in pushing relentlessly toward their goals; they rarely take much time for soul-searching. They are the managers and achievers in our society. In politics and religion, these men sometimes experience sudden (and, to others, alarming) conversions. They can be dyed-in-the-wool atheists one day and born-again Christians the next. And more often than not they'll believe their new faith as fervently as the one they've just discarded.

• If you scored highest on Part Three, you are likely to be an ectomorph. This is the category from which many of mankind's saints and geniuses come. They are dreamers and idealists who are usually harder on themselves than on others. They often have very high sex drives, but can easily become sexually frustrated because they also tend to be very inhibited. They are nervous and often compulsive in the attention they pay to details.

Physically, such men tend to be thin. In peak condition, they may resemble pro basketballers: lanky and lean. But when they are out of condition, these guys look as if they've swallowed a basketball. They develop slouches and potbellies, while retaining their sunken chests and skinny arms and legs.

• If your scores were relatively close in two, or in all three, categories, you are probably a blend of body-type characteristics. (An alternative explanation may be that you haven't really examined yourself honestly and carefully, in which case you're likely to be a mesomorph — a Part Two type — no matter what your scores were.)

When you're a blend of categories, the possible combinations are incalculable. You may be a grouchy fat man or a convivial thin man. You may have heavy thighs and a narrow torso. You may have a powerful build and a dreamer's mind. Items on which you gave yourself four of five points will give you a clue to characteristics that are strongest in you.

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THE PENTHOUSE HISTORY OF CRIME IN AUSTRALIA — PART VIII

A CRIME CAPITAL EMERGES

BY DENIS WHITBURN

I'll go up the road for a minute, for paint," Joseph 'The Writer' Borg told his friend, Ben Zammit, at about 11am on May 28, 1968. The two had been painting the house Borg had moved into only weeks before at 36 Brighton Boulevard, about 400 metres along from the Bondi police station in a quiet street in North Bondi.

As Borg, 35, Maltese-born and an immigrant to Australia in 1952, approached his white 1963 Holden utility parked directly opposite his house, he had no idea that he was within a minute of death. He had left the car in the street after returning home at 3am, having spent the night making the rounds of "The Doors," the Darlinghurst centre of prostitution in Sydney, where he had collected rents from the prostitutes working the 20 houses he controlled. Due to appear in Central Court on a charge relating to prostitution, Borg was also out on $150 bail after appealing against a conviction for attempting to bribe a policeman.

Described later as Sydney's king of vice, he was considered the top man in a $1 million a year vice racket. His tag "The Writer" was earned by the constant stream of letters he dashed off to senior police officials complaining of the over-zealousness of the Vice Squad in raiding his establishments — an aggravation he could well do without in early 1968, what with other pressures coming from pretenders to his territory. Vice was a volatile occupation at the best of times, but of late there had been a resurgence of "occupational fever" from two opposition factions which coveted control of The Doors — the descriptive title Darlinghurst had won because of women propositioning the clientele from open doorways. Borg's houses were netting him up to

CRIME CAPITAL

$10,000 a week. In the preceding months newspapers had warned of the possibility of gang warfare flaring up between the Darlinghurst racketeers. During the four hours of darkness between Borg's arrival home and daybreak, three men had approached the Holden utility and while one stood guard, the other two had slipped under the car and set gelignite sticks in the canister under the driver's seat. The explosives, detonator and battery were then wired into the circuit connected to the car's ignition switch.

Borg opened the door to the utility, got in, placed the key in the ignition and turned it on. The impact of the explosion was devastating; it tore a metre-wide hole in the roof as it buckled upwards, pushed the bonnet forward, shattering the front and rear windows, and turned the seats into a charred mess. Glass, metal and plastic scattered over a 50 square metre area and windows were shattered in nearby houses.

Zammit ran to the car and dragged Borg from the blazing wreckage.

"Joe, don't worry, I'll help you . . . my God, I'll help you," he cried hysterically as he tried to stop the flow of blood with an old blanket. But it was already too late for Borg. His lower body had taken the bulk of the explosion. It had severed his right leg. His clothes were smouldering and he was covered in blood. Borg was dead on arrival at St Vincents Hospital. He was the last victim in a line of underworld executions which took place throughout the Sixties as the real power in crime passed from the hands of the old guard into those of the establishment.

In an ironic twist, Borg bequeathed his assets to the RSPCA and while the Victorian body turned down its share, the NSW branch readily accepted, recognising the generosity of the bequest by sending a large wreath to the benefactor's funeral: "In Gratitude from all the Homeless Animals." While the Society was prepared to respect the memory of the dead, the three suspects charged with Borg's murder were less inclined.

"All the Maltese men very angry with Joe," Maltese waiter Paul Mifsud is claimed to have told Detective Sergeant F. Charlton of the CIB "He rob all the boys' girls that work in The Doors. He King Joe." Mifsud had suggested to Paul Attard, a 24-year-old painter and docker, also Maltese, that maybe they should shoot Borg. The idea was considered too dangerous — Borg carried a gun constantly. Then the bomb was raised as an alternative. The two men were sentenced to life imprisonment while a third, Keith Kellior, received seven years.

On the surface it seemed that Justice had been served, yet doubts as to the actual motivator behind the hiring of Borg's killers prevailed. Such was the Sydney underworld climate by the mid-to-late Sixites that the law, in convicting those responsible for the numerous slayings taking place in reorganising the power structure behind the rackets, could never be absolutely certain the real felons had been brought to book. The tentacles of crime were being drawn in to a hierarchy which would do away with antiquated ways.

Supreme rule would eventually be vested in the chosen few. The power *to rule* would come from publicly elected officials and factions within law enforcement, as Sydney clearly emerged as the crime capital of Australia. That situation would attract criminal interests from Asia and America seeking a foothold in the "new frontier" for illegal entrepreneurs.

Dr Alfred McCoy perceives NSW in the Sixties as a refuge where syndicate heads were able to expand their investments in the city's illicit economic sector by protecting themselves with "massive payoffs to police and politicians." By organising a business base founded on illegal casinos, syndicated abortion rackets and licensed clubs and poker machines, they were able to expand their interests to interstate crime and the setting up of an Australia-wide cannabis and heroin distribution network.

> The tentacles of crime were being drawn in to a hierarchy which would do away with antiquated ways

The free-form style of criminal activity which had developed during the years of Prime Minister Menzies' Fifties reign of ultra-conservatism, when crime's profile could be swept under the carpet and kept mostly from the public eye, had to be moulded into an entity able to keep pace with an advancing Australia. In McCoy's words, the Sydney underworld would come to be "ranked as one of the most powerful criminal milieu anywhere in the world."

The Fifties were a time of flux for the criminal fraternity — the razor wars, the boom war years and the disturbance caused by the public inquiries into illicit liquor activities were receding into social history. Those involved with SP bookmaking, mostly through standover tactics — collecting "an unofficial tax" on the bookies' take — coped with the ebb and flow of the game. They backed off during the police blitz on the SP bookies, which came in the wake of yet another public outcry at the illegal gambling taking place under the noses of the police, then the standover man would reactivate his business once the furore had died down. SP bookmaking was continuing as a growth industry boosted by the country's burgeoning population, now helped along by an active immigration program.

In 1951 alone, an estimated $180 million was divided between SP bookies, who were estimated to number anywhere between 30,000 and 40,000 The actual "take" in NSW was believed to be double that. Because of generous payouts to the police and politicians, the SP business was able to weather the "concentrated efforts" by police to wipe it out for all time, and to survive on public inquiries such as the 1958 Victorian Royal Commission into Off-the-Course Betting. During the course of this inquiry the commander of Number Four Division Gaming and Vice Squads, Inspector M.J. Healey, revealed that one of the major difficulties in successfully eradicating the SP bookie lay in the fact that almost two-thirds of the police whose job it was to bring about their demise were corrupt. The problem the NSW Labor Government had in trying to combat the growth of the SP bookie was due to the influence many of them had over ALP branches through payoffs to political figures.

A few of the old hands who had received their schooling during the razor wars and the boom war years formed a bridge between the "old guard" and those to come. Richard Reilly, a former dance hall and 400 Club bouncer for Phil Jeffs (see Crime In Australia Parts VI and VII), acquitted of murder and arrested for blackmarketeering during World War II, was able to successfully elude any further prosecution after 1952 as he carved himself out a niche in the rackets. His close police and political ties enabled him to enter the Sixties as reputedly "the most powerful criminal in Sydney." Reilly controlled two Kings Cross baccarat schools and, in the words of the *Sunday Mirror,* the man behind a gang preying on abortionists and vice girls."

A bankrupt radio technician, Reilly ran a garage in the Cross and his employees would often see him dial a silent number, getting him straight through to one of the most senior officers on the police force. It was a number recorded in a small notebook which held the names and telephone numbers of the city's influentials, among them a Labor MLA whose relationship with Reilly was of a "normal parliamentary nature", and a former NSW Minister of Justice, an acquaintance of some 20 years who could see no wrong in having him for a friend.

Reilly's political "in" held him in good stead until the Labor Party was ousted in 1965 by Robert Askin's Liberal-Country Party coalition. Alfred McCoy explains: "The complex, Byzantine quality of the Labor Party allowed almost all illicit operators access to power, but prevented any one from monopolising police or political protection." That situation was to change drastically once the Labor Party was removed from office. And a number of the "illicit operators," including Reilly, were dispensed with.

Reilly's financial base was the two Kings Cross baccarat schools, the Kellet Club and the Spade Room Club. If SP bookmaking was perceived as "the right" of the working man then illegal gambling was perceived by underworld heads as *their* right, with each having control over their own baccarat schools. Despite various police raids and assurances from the head of police that they were subject to intensive police action, the schools continued to flourish through the Fifties and into the Sixties, turning over hundreds of thousands of dollars between them.

Prostitution, the mainstay of crime since the First Fleet landed, was in the hands of the small entrepreneur working a stable of girls around the Cross and Darlinghurst, where the Maltese community surrounding The Doors could give a Joe Borg a buffer against intrusion.

Although down in the scale of criminal interest, licensed clubs — growing from 85 in 1946 to 932 over the next decade — had potential for illicit exploitation. Poker machines had been around since before World War I and in the 40 years between their introduction and legalisation in 1956, were tolerated by the law so long as they were confined to licensed clubs. Users were seen as contributing to the support of their club. One slot machine syndicate tried unsuccessfully to spread their use to pubs in the early Thirties, with a cash payout to be filtered into Labor Party funds and a scheme whereby 45 percent of all takings were to be handed over to hospitals with the sanction of the NSW Hospital Commission.

Twenty years after the legalisation of poker machines, NSW club-goers were putting an unprecedented (*anywhere in the world*) $4600 million through the slots; twice the budget for national defence!

The relatively quiet years from post World War II on — during which there had been only a small number of underworld forays where the gun had been used to solve arguments between opposing sides — was broken with a barrage of machine-gun fire, cutting down Robert "Pretty Boy" Walker in the best Chicago style. Driving past Walker as he walked his dog, two men slowed a stolen car and fired on their target with an Owen sub-machinegun. Six months later, a gunman sank 10 bullets from a semi-automatic .22 calibre rifle into standover man Charles Bourke, then reloaded and fired another round into his body. Neither murder was solved, not even after extensive police enquiries.

The man police were convinced had a place in both murders, Raymond "Ducky" O'Connor, died by the gun in one of the most bizarre shootings in Australian criminal history. He entered the Latin Quarter in the early hours of May 26, 1967 and moved to a table where Leonard McPherson was seated with two friends — within view of Detective Sergeant M.J. Wild of the CIB. When the club was closing for the night and people started to leave, a shot rang out. Drawing his gun, Wild pushed his way through the crowd to McPherson's table, where he found O'Connor on the ground, with a bullet wound to the head. Two pistols, a .25 and .32 calibre, lay beside him. The second gun was clean of fingerprints. As he approached McPherson's table, O'Connor had pulled a gun, McPherson said, and in the struggle which ensued between O'Connor and one of the two men with McPherson, the would-be assassin had shot himself. It was a story the police were prepared to accept and no charges were laid.

Joseph Borg . . . dead in car blast

No stranger to the police by the time of the O'Connor shooting, McPherson had risen to prominence over the last decade: he had faced his first charge at age 12 and over subsequent years built up another 70-odd arrests. His name appeared in connection with investigations into various outburst of criminal violence, to the point where he said: "It's a funny thing that when anyone is shot in Sydney, the first thing they do is run to me." McPherson said this following the murder of George Hackett, shot 13 times at the rear of a hotel in Leichhardt in July 1959. The case against McPherson and William "Snowy" Rayne collapsed in court when an uncooperative witness testified that neither of them shot the criminal.

The year 1967 was proving to be a watershed for crime. Five months before the Latin Quarter fiasco, another graduate from bouncing at clubs and baccarat schools, "Big" Barry Flock, manager of two massage parlors masquerading as health clinics, was executed in Paddington. He was shot four times in the head, on hospital grounds. Police investigations and a Coroner's inquest petered out, leaving this case also unsolved.

Sex was at a premium. Sydney had become, in the previous year, the R & R base for American servicemen on one week's leave from Vietnam. Their presence was to have a very marked effect on renewed interest by Australians in drugs, but in the short term the "Yankee dollar" was the target of vice and gambling merchants, some of whom later would extend their illicit activities to drugs.

With massage parlors booming in and around the Cross and the public demanding police action, the Leader of the State Opposition guaranteed Labor would clean out the vice dens. The fact that police were powerless to act against the fake parlors (through a flaw in the law) was an indictment of the Askin government; the Premier clearly knew what was going on, but was doing nothing about it.

The Askin government insisted it was prepared to give the police new laws but, as the Sydney *Mirror* commented: "No action is being taken about the booming vice business, presumably because police have not asked the government for the laws they say they need."

A cynic could be forgiven for believing power-brokers within the government and police force were less than enthusiastic in wanting to clean up the city. Detective Sergeant Jack Whitehead of Melbourne's Vice Squad believed his Sydney counterparts could put the parlors and vice rackets out of business, on his own department had done in Melbourne. Whitehead's squad had beaten the parlors by prosecuting the girls offering their customers "special massages," using a section of the law which made it clear that certain massages of men constituted prostitution. "I can't see why Sydney can't do the same," Whitehead said.

His department had also combated Sydney vice criminals trying to move into Melbourne by placing an obvious tail on them, making it clear they would get nowhere in establishing a business there. They left town mission incomplete.

Perhaps there was a clue to Whitehead's view of Vice Squad ineffectiveness in Sydney in an incident that arose during a bankruptcy hearing in early 1965, when an alleged brothel proprietor, Aileen Donaldson was accused of being in partnership with her alleged lover, Detective Sergeant

CRIME CAPITAL

Harry Giles of the Darlinghurst Vice Squad. This relationship enabled Donaldson to operate without police harrassment during a heated police campaign on The Doors in 1962. Following suspension by Police Commissioner, Norman Allan, Giles resigned from the force.

Of equal concern was the proliferation of baccarat schools. Sydney Lord Mayor John Armstrong came out with an "if you can't beat them, join them" stance, favoring legalisation. Premier Askin opposed the Mayor's view. "We don't want to see Sydney become another Las Vegas," he blustered. To his way of thinking, the State already had sufficient legalised forms of gambling. "If police report that baccarat and other illegal gambling activities are at the root of gang feuds and murders, there will have to be a determined drive to wipe them out.

"We have no sympathy for gangsters and criminals who get themselves killed preying on people's weaknesses," *The Sun* newspaper editorialised. "But it is the police who should be getting rough with the baccarat schools and their organisers. The players can find them easily enough, why not 21 Division?"

"Police action is taken at all times and in all cases when evidence of unlawful gaming and/or wagering is forthcoming," Police Commissioner Allan said, defending the efficiency of his department. Within the year, the first of the casinos — the 33 Club — would be operating 300 metres from Darlinghurst Police Division headquarters; it was "one of the best and most tightly controlled gaming rooms in the world," according to a columnist in *The Bulletin*.

According to the Independent MLA, John Hatton, speaking in Parliament in August 1979, shopfront gambling and rackets came of age under the Askin government in the Sixties. He believed that these activities may have been encouraged from the top of government and police power.

They were also given a nudge along by ambitious independent operators such as John Warren, a baccarat school promoter ousted from the Cross by Richard Reilly. Allegedly being financed in a scheme by a backer with a similar ambitions to his own, Warren planned to take over control of Sydney from the syndicate heads by murdering them one by one.

An anonymous witness known only as "Joe Smith" when he turned Crown's evidence gave a first-hand account of the planning that went into the eventual execution of Richard Reilly. One means of getting rid of Reilly, picked up in a conversation overheard by Smith, was to throw petrol into his car and set him alight. Settling on execution by the gun, Warren carried out a number of practice runs, timing Reilly's schedule. On the night of June 26, 1967, Warren (along with his girlfriend, Glory McGlinn and with "Joe Smith" driving a stolen car) parked outside a block of flats in Manning Road, Double Bay. Reilly was inside visiting his mistress. Armed with a Parker-Hale rifle and double-barrelled shotgun, disguised with hoods, the assassins waited behind a stone wall for their victim. At about 7.30pm, Reilly left the block and as he walked toward his $17,000 blue Maserati sports car, Warren opened fire with both guns. The rifle bullet and the blast from the shotgun "big enough to kill an elephant" cut Reilly from the left of his neck down to the chest. Reilly came at Warren like a tank, made it to his car and drove away.

Warren was in a panic as he fled with McGlinn and "Smith". He knew Reilly was in excellent shape and had aimed at his stomach, believing he could not miss.

"This man will go into a mad shooting orgy tonight and Sydney will literally be strewn with bodies," Warren said, not knowing Reilly's Maserati had already crashed into a shop front only a short distance from the scene of the shooting. Hearing news of his death over the radio later, after they had dropped into a Leagues Club to set up an alibi, Warren and McGlinn threw their arms around each other with glee.

> Convinced she was cheating on him, he shot her dead, along with the suspected lover and her mother

"Now we all get paid," Warren cried. "Because if he hadn't died, the old man wouldn't have paid anyone." Reilly's death was celebrated at a cafe over doughnuts and coffee, where "Joe Smith" received a payment of $500. When asking Warren why he was holding on to the murder weapons, he was told there were four others to be got.

"Lennie McPherson, Stan Smith, Johnny Reagan and a copper by the name of James." He believed James had something to do with having his baccarat school closed up. James knew of Warren's hit list and was concerned about his own safety.

The two financial backers alleged to have hired Warren and paid him $12,000 for the Reilly hit and other $8000 for the murder of a garage hand, Claude Eldridge, had the case against them dropped by the Attorney-General following the death of Warren and his girlfriend six months later. Convinced she was cheating on him, he shot her dead, along with the suspected lover and her mother. Whatever steps Warren was planning next in his takeover of the Sydney rackets ended when he turned the gun on himself.

In placing Reilly's death into perspective with the reorganisation of the rackets, Alfred McCoy points to the changeover of the baccarat schools around the Cross to casinos over a four-year period. Roulette, dice, pontoon and blackjack were the draws as the shabby, down-at-heels surroundings of the baccarat and two-up schools gave way to garish decor and club hostesses handing out free drinks to keep the punters well-oiled and in the gambling.

Sydney, it appeared, was an open city where anything went — with the sanction of authority. By 1974 the turnover of the casinos was so enormous that it broke down to $15 million profit after overheads, which included a $1.4 million a year payout in bribes to senior police and politicians. "I would not be surprised if some police officers in Sydney have shared as much as a million dollars out of graft over the years," a former detective stated in the *National Times* in 1973.

Bribes of $12,000 and up to a hefty $15,000 at a time were paid in cash when the police "bag man" called each month to collect, he said.

Claiming that gambling was difficult to supress, the Police Commissioner favored legalising the casinos. Former policeman Mervyn Rutherford said this was garbage and related an incident where he had submitted a memorandum suggesting a raid on the 33 Club.

Because of the elite patronage which included prominent businessmen, knights and show business identities who were not to be disturbed, no action was taken. Rutherford charged a high level of corruption within the force.

With much public drum-beating, Premier Askin gave the impression he and his government were tackling the problem head on — and they were . . . giving the impression. It was business as usual around town as the wheels were spun, the dice thrown, the cards were dealt, vice was thriving and the spectre of drugs reappeared. Sydney had taken on the character of that glittering capital of chance in the Nevada desert, the place Askin had publicly declared he did not want to see *his* city become.

An environment had been created in which police and government officials could successfully bamboozle the public with assurances that organised crime was merely a figment of the overzealous media's imagination. ○—

Honda's awesome array of 1983 bikes will cement it's number one spot

NEW LIGHT FROM THE RISING SUN

BY NOEL CHRISTENSEN

Honda Motor Company president, Kiyoshi Kawashima and the Honda VF750F sports bike.

A white flag run up in Tokyo last July signified the end of a two-way struggle for world supremacy in motorcycle manufacturing. The war between Honda and Yamaha which had raged for two years was over: a simple announcement in the newspapers that Yamaha was cutting back production said it all.

Yamaha had unloaded its best shot from number two position at number one, Honda, but had failed to replace the long-time leader. The conflict, an affair of prestige more than anything, began two years earlier as Western markets prepared for the release of the 1982 calendar year models from both companies, the top two bike makers in the world.

"Make Yamaha number one in 1981" was the catchcry of the revolution and the message was carried by company executives around the globe, geeing up support for what was termed the most important Yamaha sales campaign ever. The fact that Yamaha wanted numero uno and was prepared to bloody noses on the way came as a surprise to a Western world expecting Japanese actions to speak louder than words.

Still, the feeling was that you can't blame the underdog for having a go; after all, they had been there for nigh on two decades and were tantalisingly close to the "Big Fella", so maybe the time was right for a change.

In some areas Honda was outshone by the three tuning forks badge of Yamaha; the most evident of these was on the race track, where the two-stroke Yamahas have a virtual monopoly on grand prix racing. Yamaha captured its share of world championship honors in motocross, road racing and snowmobiles. At this time Honda was regenerating its racing efforts after retiring from world championship sports following a record-breaking period in the mid-Sixties which saw them snare almost everything on offer in the way of crowns and titles. Yamaha's sporting interests were indeed more glamorous than Honda's in the Seventies and their name was kept to the forefront of world publicity by grand prix heroes like Californian Kenny Roberts.

Ultimately Yamaha's push for more sales was directed at the distributor and the retailer to determine the tide of battle. The 1981 Yamaha range of models was a broad spectrum coverage of all motorcyling areas without maxi-punch in any single category. Top of the line was the long-in-the-tooth four-cylinder XS1100 roadster, which had won the 1978 Castrol Six Hour but enjoyed less spectacular results on the showroom floor.

The quality level of performance and reliability of the entire range was nothing less than first class. But the range lacked innovation and the high-tech development that was starting to quicken Honda's stride. The Yamaha challenge failed in that first year of battle as Honda lifted its game to a record peak. Its 23,000 employees produced 3.5 million motorcycles that year, a further 1.8 million cars, trucks and buses, and more than a

million generators, pumps, mowers, tillers and general power products.

And when Yamaha came out for round two with its hopes of world domination pinned on a fleet of bikes that were much the same as the previous year's except for the inclusion of the 650 turbocharged four-cylinder road bike as flagship, the end was nigh.

The winners are expecting a big year in 1983 to round off their 35th year of production. From a company founded by a man of the same name who grafted tiny petrol engines to bicycles in devastated postwar Japan, the 35th year as far as motorcycles are concerned will be unforgettable.

Australasian Honda dealers expect the first of the new models to be released in late January — to them that's three months too late, for they were privy to a spectacular unveiling of the bikes in the Tokyo Prince Hotel in October last year. What they saw in the space of one afternoon literally made their eyes water. Honda has come out with an awesome array of bikes to supplement the highlights of their 1982 range.

For several years now the biggest selling motorcycle in Australia has been the XL250 trail bike, which is a split personality road/off-road uncomplicated starting point in a motorcycling career. Further up the capacity range Honda again claims leadership with the CB900 four-cylinder roadster which has sporty looks and performance to give it the edge.

NSW distributor, Bennett Honda Pty Ltd, will increase the motorcycle range for this year by 50 percent with the importation of 26 additions and the deletion of eight, for a total of 52 separate lines.

Of those bikes on stage in Tokyo the series of V-configuration engines — twins and fours — will carry the main Honda hopes. Although the V configuration has long been regarded as the ultimate powerplant layout for a motorcycle, the Japanese have made in-line transverse engines the priority . . . until now.

Elimination of vibration in smoother running multi-cylinder, in-line engines was a relatively simple task. Sticking to a 90-degree piston angle for V-engines produces zero primary vibration, but the penalty is a loss of compactness which is a drawback to fine handling.

Honda's 5000-strong Research and Development department devised an offset dual pin crankshaft, which allows engine cylinders to be set at less than a right angle while remaining free of teeth-loosening primary vibration.

Honda's model range for 1983 will be expanded by five V-configuration engined bikes in just one year, which is a true indication of where market expansion and concentration of development is heading for the remainder of this decade.

Honda's entry in the scooter market, the 70cc Lead and the sporty VT250 road bike.

With sales in Australia in the up to 250cc class commanding 58 percent of the market, Honda has a lot going on the smallest of the Vs, the VT250. Producing 35 horsepower, the quarter-litre version is by far the sportiest Honda to contest this class since the pioneering days of the Sixties.

Yamaha currently enjoys a big seller in the class with its street clone of the two-stroke, twin cyclinder, liquid-cooled racer, which pops along at 170km/h in a simple but effective format.

The news that Honda was unable to meet world demand late last year for the VT250 sent a shiver through local dealers, who feared they could miss out on shipments of the new bike until production caught up. Assembly line quotas have been positively earmarked for the local market, ensuring the entire range of the new generation product will be available this year, with release of the VT250 late in January. Expectations of a greater slice of the 250 market fall to the sharp, bold styled VT, which is the first of its class to sport the state of the racing art 16-inch front-wheel.

The double overhead camshaft, eight-valve liquid-cooled engine, operating on an 11:1 compression ratio and channelling the ponies to the rear wheel via a six-speed gear box, is an unmerciful package with tender heart appeal.

A step up in size means no less attraction for the Honda Vs. Performance freaks will be able to get off on the 90 hp lightweight VF750F, which burns rubber up the drag strip with an elapsed time of 11.1 secs for the standing 400 metres. In

The dual-purpose trail/road XL600 and the enduro XR500 are new for dirt riders.

achieving the highest-performance road bike of its class, the designers were spurred on by the goal of winning this year's American Motorcycle Association Superbike championship. Among many of its race track design features is the one-way clutch which, given sufficient back load on a down shift, slips and thus prevents excess strain on the lightweight transmission, and also eliminates rear wheel hop.

Four cylinder 400cc and twin cylinder 500cc bikes round out the in-line V range for this year, while the forerunner (the shaft-driven VF750S) and a new 650cc transverse twin complete a comprehensive statement of what it's all about for 1983.

Honda development in other areas has not been dormant: The off-road bike range has been strengthened by the introduction of the XL600R trail bike, which has all the attributes necessary for a Sunday drive across the Nullarbor, and the XR350 enduro bike, which seems to embody the best features of its stablemates in 125, 185, 200, 250 and 500cc sizes.

If boondocking is your go and you need something more amphibious than a conventional bike, then there are now six ATC (All Terrain Cycle) three wheeler models coming. The smallest, powered by a 70cc engine, is for the junior members of the family, while the 250R is the most popular go-anywhere trike, geared for open competition in the USA.

Honda pioneered the fat-wheeled fleet 10 years ago and then, through gentle persuasion, sparked and fanned the mud-sliding, desert-riding form of competition which has made the ATC a formidable competitor in big money off-road events like the Baja 1000.

The day is not far away in Australia when competition events for ATCs will be held on motocross tracks and speedways, where expert riders can come through corners all crossed up under maximum oversteer. The Honda trikes have won the acceptance of farmers through their load-carrying capability and, when a trailer is hooked up, the ability to move feed and livestock in wet conditions, which would bog anything with narrower tyres.

The scooter is also set to return to Australia this year as Honda has yet again decided to give the small two-wheelers a chance in what has proven to be an impregnable market. Yamaha and Suzuki have already brought scooters out of retirement, but the same old reluctance remains in the market place.

With such a diverse market in the under 125cc range, the scooter will have a tough time establishing itself. Still, Honda's attitude is to hang in there and win acceptance through perseverence, as gradually the word will spread about these easy-to-operate cosmopolitan commuters.

Honda's 80cc Lead is fully automatic and powerful enough to carry even larger-framed types effortlessly in urban conditions.

And what of the guys and gals who took the two year war to Yamaha — the 23,000 white-clad employees who live in a graffiti and vandalism-free environment where public walls and telephones, vending machines and fixtures are sacrosanct — the people who work in a union-free factory and are encouraged to exercise mentally by the All-Honda Ideas Competition biannually?

To the hundreds of thousands of visitors who snake through factory production lines each year, the workers' efficiency in building the product is mesmerising. With their ears plugged off to the outside world, repeating mechanical actions in the space of a telephone booth for eight hours, five days a week, they are a constant source of amazement as they inject life into the computer-operated lines of nuts and bolts that give birth to a car, truck or motorcycle every 15 seconds or so.

An occidental Oscar must go to the super fit, small in stature workers in the welding areas. Mummified externally by protective clothing except for a slit for the eyes, they work amongst an inverted forest of counterbalanced spot welders joining metal plates in a shower of pyrotechnic sparks and artificial light. In their acceptance speeches the welders would want to thank head office management, fellow factory workers, clerical and admin, research and development, sales and marketing, PR, mum and dad — and Yamaha, Suzuki and Kawasaki for keeping them honest.

That's the way they are.

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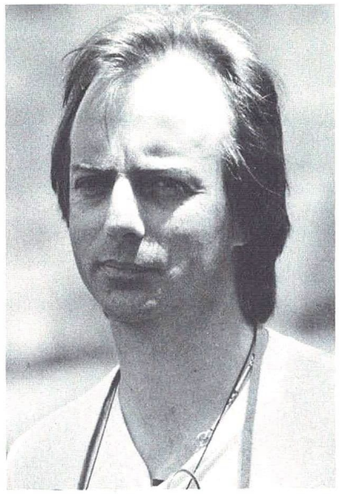
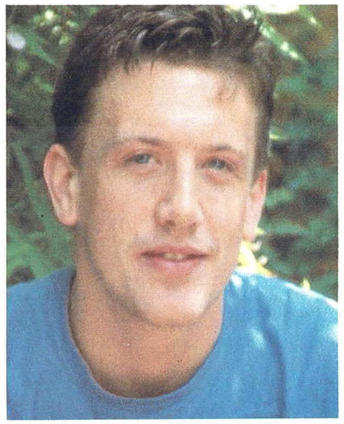


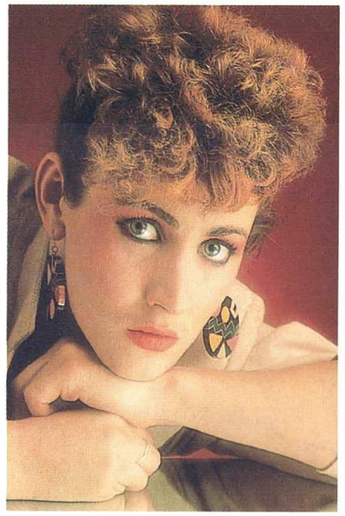
TIM STORRIER

Like many Australian artists, Tim Storrier has always found the outback's light and space a major inspiration. "I'm not the first person to be intrigued by blue sky and a horizon," says Storrier, whose critically-acclaimed paintings which he calls "illusions" and painted "assemblages" making use of materials like canvas, leather and string, have earned him a reputation as Australia's number one young artist. The 33-year-old Sydney-sider is about to expand his horizons with his first overseas exhibition at Fischers Fine Art in London, early in 1983. Storrier's work is already known in international art circles, as well as being hung in the National Gallery in Canberra, The Art Gallery of NSW and in most of the country's major private collections. But his reputation will undoubtedly be enhanced, as have those of other Australians who have exhibited overseas — Nolan, Boyd, Whitely and Williams — when the 25 pieces he is currently working on get prime time in one of England's most prestigious galleries. Storrier was originally known as a landscape artist, but has diversified, working successfully with a variety of media including print making, silk screening, lithography, etching and photography. A familiar figure in Sunday newspaper social pages, Storrier denies his celebrity status, claiming that "painters don't make good celebrities: most of them tend to be too drunk or too rude." According to gallery director Robin Gibson, Storrier doesn't fit either of those adjectives. "He is a dedicated and regimented worker, says Gibson. "Few artists lead such an orderly lifestyle. He is a true professional, not a dilettante. He doesn't keep flying off for holidays in Bali. That's why his exibitions are always of such a high standard."



SIMON BURKE

Born and bred in Paddington, Sydney, Simon Burke did all the things that kids from suburbia do. He played footy and cricket with his mates and rode his bike after school; he also won the Australian Film Institute Award for Best Actor when he was 13 years old. Simon started hassling his mother to let him try for parts in commercials when he was nine. By the age of 12 he was a veteran performer working with Robyn Nevin in a play at the Nimrod. Then came the chance to audition for Fred Schepisi, director of *The Devil's Playground.* Simon landed the part in that film — and the coveted award. However, he admits, "that performance was all Fred. We built a complete contact with each other; Fred swept all the consciousness of film-making aside." So there was no feeling uncomfortable with the techniques of film, something that Simon the adult actor is only now coming to terms with. Although there was never any doubt in his mind that he'd go into acting, there was always the great dilemma of whether or not to proceed with formal training, for example at NIDA. This decision was never finalised until recently. At times during the past four years Simon saw himself becoming a serious actor especially in his stage work. But then *The Irishman* and his eight-month stint in *The Restless Years* made him realise he had a lot to learn about acting and himself. Then came the powerful experience of working in Adelaide with English director Richard Cotterill, who helped Simon realise once and for all that as an actor and a person he had gone too far to go back to formal training. Cotterill threw him into a part that Simon thought was far beyond his range and depth — but it worked. "Adelaide and Cotterill stripped all the shit away," he says. Simon, now 21, feels he is finally being accepted as a serious actor who intends to be around for a long time.

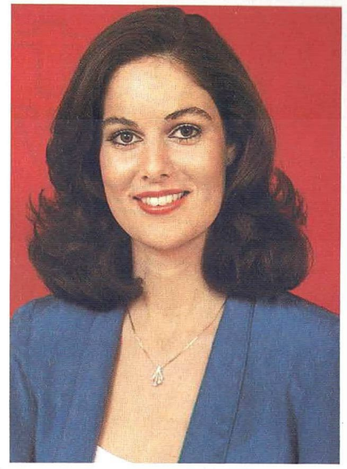


GRACE KNIGHT

I'd sing anything if it meant I could go to a different country. That was my way of getting around for nothing, getting good wages and only having to work 20 minutes a night". This nomadic criterion for cabaret performance took 26-year-old Grace Knight, of the Sydney-based band the Eurogliders, on the scampi-and-chips club circuit in her native Scotland. In ever-expanding sojourns she worked Pontins holiday camp (southern England), the south of France and a ship casino in the Persian Gulf. Finally she sang her way to Perth on a *Women's Weekly* World Discovery tour in 1977. After a stint as a Dirty Dick's Maid Marion and more club work she hung up her sequined gowns in 1978 and joined what was to become the Eurogliders. The Tamla and soul covers were replaced by the hard-edged pop of songwriter Bernie Lynch. Perth is not noted for its kindness to groups specialising in original material, but the band built up a strong following, especially with the support of local FM radio. Early last year, with the ink still wet on a contract from Polygram, they decided it was time to head east to the centre of the Australian rock market. The move incorporated a six week detour via Manila to record their debut album — there was no suitable studio unbooked here at the time. Though not directly involved in the songwriting, Grace does a lot visually to clarify the songs for the fuzzed, drunken senses of pub audiences. She is modest about her vocal prowess and expresses a strong affinity for acting rather than singing. Mentions of interest in the band from Holland and Germany inspire a hint of wanderlust in her eyes, but the lady is adamant that such travel means a band tour. Cabaret's loss is our gain.

ALFREDO COSTANZO

A folksy success story to make Al Grassby go misty-eyed: the the tale of a proud little Calabrian who went from tending a fruit shop to triple Australian Drivers' Champion . . . and all it took was 26 years of dedication and struggle. Alfredo Costanzo emigrated here at 14 — a car-crazy Italian kid who didn't know a word of English. Today, in an accent still as fruity as tartufi, Costanzo says all he's ever really wanted to do was race. At 18 he bought his first set of wheels, a Fiat 1100. Later came a real race car, a tatty old Lotus 20. Track superstardom managed to sidestep the gutsy Italian; he plainly possessed the natural gifts but just as obviously was bereft of two other vital ingredients . . . technical know-how and money. Battlers do win car races, but only in the movies. Never did Costanzo get the chance to show his wares in the latest equipment. Always it was hand-downs — until his family rallied around and Alfie had himself a Formula 5000. He was a win-or-bust racer in the big F5000 and the crowds loved him for it. But back-slapping and cheers don't pay the bills. Disillusioned, he prepared to retire at the end of 1978. Timely intervention by moneyed Melbourned sportsman Alan Hamilton kept Alfie in motor racing. Hamilton, an admirer of the Costanzo talent, furnished a succession of competitive race cars and pro back-up; Alfie did the rest. The 1980 and 1981 Gold Star Australian Championships went to the little man with the big heart. Last year Costanzo trailed by one point going into the final race of the championship, the Australian Grand Prix. Alfie finished fifth, sufficiently clear of championship rival John Bowe to clinch the title for the third year straight. This year, though, Costanzo has lost his fairy godfather; Hamilton is staying out of motor sport for 12 months and is flogging off his race cars. Costanzo, now 40, is back to battling for his motor racing survival.



ANN SANDERS

It may not be the most flattering of analogies, but when Ann Sanders left Perth for Sydney nearly a year ago she was a big fish leaving a small pond. No slight intended on the city of the Golden West or indeed on the attractive Miss Sanders, but when she packed her bags to cross the continent this cool lady had just about run the gamut of Perth TV. At 23 she had two Logies under her belt for being that city's most popular female personality in 1981 and 1982. She'd worked in TV and TV production since just before her 19th birthday, doing everything from sitting in the presenter's chair and screen interviews to working as a weather girl. Ann had fallen into the video biz not long after she left school to begin studying to become a teacher. She was approached by a TVW production manager to audition for TV work and from then on her intelligence, calm assurance and classical good looks have won her wide popularity. Now she's in Sydney fronting *Action Line,* a community watchdog segment on Rupert Murdoch's Channel 10. "The community service the show provides is unique in Australia and the work it involves is teaching me a great deal," says Ann. "And that's what I'm in this business for — to learn and keep on learning." Ann's on-camera style has been compared with that of *Nationwide's* Geraldine Doogue, another charming and incisive West Australian export, but while Ann admits that she has been approached to work on other programs, and that investigative reporting and current affairs present an inviting challenge, she plans to stay sitting pretty with *Action Line* until she is fully competent to move on. While Channel 10's news catchphrase may be "The Team To Watch", Ann Sanders' screen presence and her promising future make her "The One To Watch".

Sweet chastity

IN THE BACK-YARD OF THE WHITE HOUSE THE LEADER OF THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL NATION IS WORKING OUT. A RIGID DISCIPLINE TO KEEP THAT DIAMOND SHARP MIND HONED TO THE PERFECT PRECISION NECESSARY TO CUT ITS WAY THROUGH THE DEVIATIONS OF 20TH CENTURY WORLD AFFAIRS.....

OKAY— WHO ARE YOU?

YOU KNOW WHO I AM!

YOU COULD BE A CLONE!

HAND ME MY STARR DOUBLE ACTION ARMY 44 IRON, HABIBY BABY!

OKAY! OKAY! WELL DONE! A FINE SECURITY JOB— THE BEST I'VE SEEN!

GEE— THANKS! BE SURE TO TELL THE PRESIDENT!

NO 1

IF IT COMES TO A SHOW DOWN AT SUN UP— I'M FASTER THAN ANY OF 'EM!

THEY WOULDN'T STAND A CHANCE, CHIEF!

by RON EMBLETON and BOB GUCCIONE

I TOLD YOU NOT TO DISTURB ME UNLESS IT'S AN EMERGENCY!

DON'T ANYONE PANIC— I'M HERE!

THE CUBANS HAVE INVADED FLORIDA?

THE RUSSIANS HAVE PRESSED THE BUTTON?

THE JAPANESE HAVE CORNERED THE HAMBURGER MARKET?

NO— THIS IS REAL TROUBLE! SWEET CHASTITY IS GONNA RENOUNCE THE WORLD AND SEEK REDEMPTION THRU' SELF SACRIFICE! SHE'S JOINING BILLY GREYBLOOD!

THIS IS AN EMERGENCY!

AAHGH!

HERE WE HAVE A UNIQUE AND INTERESTING POLITICAL SITUATION. IF CHASTITY PUBLICLY RENOUNCES OUR SOCIETY AND IF YOU DON'T SPEAK OUT AGAINST THE "GOOD GUYS"— BILLY GREYBLOOD WINS THE SUPPORT OF THE MORAL MAJORITY AND EVERY RELIGIOUS NUT CASE AND ZEALOT IN THE COUNTRY AND IS THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES!

INFLATION

UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES

ECONOMY

ON THE OTHER HAND.....

.... IF YOU SPEAK OUT AGAINST CHASTITY AND THE "GOOD GUYS" YOU LOSE THE SUPPORT OF THE MORAL MAJORITY AND EVERY RELIGIOUS NUTCASE AND ZEALOT IN THE COUNTRY AND BILLY GREYBLOOD IS THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES!

I THINK YOU'RE ALL WASHED UP, CHIEF!

WE'VE GOT TO SAVE THE COUNTRY FROM A FATE WORSE THAN DEATH!

GET TO IT, MEN!

THE PUBLICITY BUILD UP TO CHASTITY'S T.V. SPECTACULAR IS BRILLIANTLY STAGE MANAGED BY 'GOOD GUYS' ROAD MANAGER AND P.R. MAN— GERRY FOULWELL.....

HOW'S IT GOING?

LIKE A DREAM, BILLY BABY! SATELLITE LINK UP FOR THE LIVE PROGRAM —VIDEO RIGHTS, L.P. RIGHTS— SOLD!

THE SHOW— I MEAN CEREMONY WILL GO OUT FROM OUR OWN STUDIO AND THEY'RE QUEUING UP FOR THE PRIME TIME T.V. BREAKS!

ALL WE NEED IS THE 'GOOD GUYS' CHOIR AND TWO PERFORMERS —YOU AND CHASTITY! DO YOU REALIZE WHAT THIS MEANS?

WESTERN CIVILIZATION'S CRY FOR LEADERSHIP AND DIRECTION IS ABOUT TO BE ANSWERED!

IT MEANS THE BIGGEST MONEY SPINNING SH... CEREMONY IN THE HISTORY OF TELEVISION— AND THE PRODUCTION COST ARE NIL!

MAN— THERE'S MORE MONEY IN THIS GAME THAN IN ROCK MUSIC!

THE WHOLE WORLD WAITS WITH BAITED BREATH AS THE GREAT MOMENT DRAWS NIGH. FROM ALASKA TO THE ANTIPODES COUNTLESS MILLIONS SIT GLUED TO THEIR T.V. SETS

PANCHO'S BAR

THE ONLY TV IN ROSARIO DE LAS FRONTERA

YOU PAID GOOD RHINO HORN FOR THIS JUNK?

IT'S A BETTER SET THAN YOURS—IT'S JAPANESE!

WHY CAN'T WE PLAY VIDEO SPACE INV... OW!

QUIET! EVERYBODY!

RIGHT—CHOIR! LET'S HAVE BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC!

LET'EM ROLL!

FRIENDS! GOOD GUYS THE WORLD OVER! ONCE IN A LIFETIME SOME OF US ARE PRIVILEGED TO BE INSTRUMENTAL IN CHANGING THE FACE OF THE WORLD!

TONIGHT—WITHOUT FANFARES—WITHOUT BALLYHOO, I WOULD LIKE TO PRESENT TO YOU A YOUNG LADY, KNOWN TO YOU ALL, WHO HAS THAT DIVINE PRIVILEGE!

SOMEONE WHO COULD, IF SHE WISHED, HAVE ANYTHING IN THE WORLD SHE DESIRED—BUT WHO APPEARS BEFORE YOU TONIGHT IN ALL HUMILITY WITH A VERY SIMPLE MESSAGE.....

I REJECT PERSONAL AMBITION!

I REJECT THE PURSUIT OF SELF GRATIFICATION!

I REJECT SELF IMPORTANCE!

ALL IS VANITY! ONLY THROUGH SELF SACRIFICE CAN WE FIND TRUE REDEMPTION!

NOT YET, YOU IDIOT! YOU'RE SPOILING THE IMPACT OF THE SCENE!

A STUNNED SILENCE REVERBERATES AROUND THE WORLD! THEN, SLOWLY, THE CONSEQUENCES OF THIS MOMENTOUS CATACLYSM DAWNS....

IN A SWISS CLINIC, HOWARD HUGE, MULTI-BILLIONAIRE AND CHASTITY'S BENEFACTOR, SEES THE LOVE OF HIS LIFE ON THE SCREEN

SEDATE HIM, NURSE!

SHE CAN'T DO THAT!

SHE BELONGS TO ME!

SHE'S MINE! I PAID FOR HER!

AND IN A SEEDY ROOMING HOUSE SOMEWHERE IN NAPLES, IN HIDING FROM HIS CREDITORS, AWESOME WELLS SITS AMIDST THE DEBRIS OF HIS HALF FINISHED MAGNUM OPUS

IT'S HER! THE ONLY WOMAN THAT EVER WALKED OUT ON ME!

WELL-RELIGION WON'T SAVE YOU! MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR BRIEF LIFE, SWEET CHASTITY!

LET THEM HAND OUT THE OSCARS TO SATURDAY MATINEE SCIENCE FICTION SAGAS! YOU'LL FINISH THIS FILM FOR ME—AND IT WILL BE THE LAST THING YOU EVER DO!

AND AMONGST LESSER MORTALS CHASTITY'S WORDS HAVE A DEVASTATING EFFECT.....

WHAT HAVE I DONE WITH MY LIFE? SOB

WASTED IT IN THE PURSUIT OF WEALTH!

WHAT USE IS A CASTLE IN SPAIN?

A WIFE, A MISTRESS AND TWO LIVE IN COMPANIONS?

A CHATEAU IN THE LOIRE?

AN ESTATE IN THE BAHAMAS?

WHAT'S UP WITH HIM?

YOU KNOW WHAT HE'S LIKE WHERE WOMEN AND RELIGION ARE CONCERNED!

HE CAN'T BEAR TO THINK THAT SWEET CHASTITY IS HOLIER THAN HE IS!

THAT'S IT—I'M FINISHED!

YOU'LL NEVER SEE MY ASS AGAIN!

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THE OLD VALUES, MORT?

ARE ALL OUR OLD TRADITIONS SOB GONNA DISAPPEAR?

FIRST IT WUZ THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT—NOW IT'S 'GOOD GUNS'! PRETTY SOON ALL WOMEN ARE GONNA BE AS BORING AS MY OLD LADY!

GET OFF!

RECRUITING OFFICE

WE'RE FULL UP—I TELL YOU!

SHE'S A SAINT!

IT'S NO GOOD, HAROLD—I CAN'T GO THROUGH WITH IT! I'M JOINING THE "GOOD GUYS"!

NO! I GOT DIVORCED!

I'M PAYIN' A FORTUNE IN ALIMONY!

I'VE BEEN WAITIN' FOR FIVE YEARS!

WHAAA!

JUST MARRIED

AND IN FAR OFF CASTLE DREER, HOME OF VINCENT VON FRANKENSTEIN, CHASTITY'S CREATOR...

SHE'S OUT OF HER MIND! IF GREYBLOOD GETS HIS HANDS ON HER FORTUNE—I'M FINISHED!

NOT THE MOST NOBLE OF SENTIMENTS, BUT UNDERSTANDABLE IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES! HOWEVER, CHASTITY'S ACTIONS ARE TOO FAR REACHING FOR US TO GIVE A DAMN ABOUT THE FEELINGS OF SOME TWO BIT TRANSYLVANIAN BARON! WHAT CONCERNS US IS JUST HOW ALL THIS IS GOING TO EFFECT OUR LIVES?

ADVISE & DISSENT

OPINION

BY BOB ELLIS

The author is a playwright, screenwriter and journalist. He is co-author of The Legend of King O'Malley, Down Under, The James Dossier, A Very Good Year, Newsfront, Maybe This Time, Fatty Finn and Goodbye Paradise. A book of his collected pieces, Ellis Right and Wrong, will appear in June this year

WHY OUR FILM BOOM HAS BECOME A *WHIMPER*

During the past eight or nine years I've written feature films and so has my wife. We've half-bought a house and had two children on the money we've earned from writing films or assessing scripts or teaching the art of screenwriting to various impatient groups of young people, with occasional forays into documentaries, soap operas and book reviewing to finance the odd holiday in the Blue Mountains. The films we've written together, *Newsfront* and *Maybe This Time,* both won awards for best screenplay of that particular year, and so did the two films I wrote with other people, *Fatty Finn* and *Goodbye Paradise.* Six further films we've written, together or apart, are currently, as they say, awaiting production. They have producers, directors, stars and no money. They are a black comedy about the press gallery in Canberra; a nostalgic comedy about radio actors in the Forties; a thriller about a woman whose former husband returns, apparently cured, from the madhouse; a serio-comic autobiographical film about my childhood as a Seventh-Day Adventist; a film biography of the famous Sydney eccentric Bea Miles; and a semi-legendary film called *Archer,* about the journey south from Nowra by the horse that won the first Melbourne Cup. Pretty well everyone who's read these films has agreed they're very good and they ought to be made. Between them they mean to us an income before tax of $270,000 at the current (absurd) rates of pay. What, then stands between us and early retirement? You may well ask. Our directors, Paul Cox (*Lonely Hearts*), Bert Deling (*Dead Easy*), George Ogilvy (*The Whitlam Years*), James Ricketson (*Women of the Sun*) and Charles Tingwell (*The Sullivans*) are all famous, respected and prizewinning; the actors Wendy Hughes, Bill Hunter, John Ewart, Noni Hazelhurst, Leonard Teale and Judy Davis all famous, respected prizewinning; these are names to conjure or raise money with. What, then, is the problem? Why, moreover, are we now both broke, in debt, and in danger of losing our house?

The answer's not easy. A short but flabby version of it might be that most of these films now cost over two million dollars, whereas two years ago they would have cost under $800,000. And two million dollars is much too much, because two million dollars means you have to get back eight or nine million dollars from ticket sales in cinemas around the world, and another half million or so from sales to television, cable and airlines, before you can show a profit of one cent on your investment. Two million people, in short, have to queue up and see your movie. In the dark, in the cold. Paying babysitters, parking with difficulty. Risking muggers. That movie might be *Starstruck,* or *Heatwave,* or *The Killing of Angel Street* — films made largely for an Australian audience. Two million Australians are unlikely to queue up and see them. Two hundred thousand, maybe. This fact was not too plain to the investors when *Starstruck* and *Heatwave* were made. It is very plain now. A recession is on, and the money is drying up in all areas of risk. And two million dollars is a big area of risk, to put it mildly.

How did all this come about? Why are film budgets now so high, when two years ago they were less than half the current figures?

Well, it happened like this. Two years ago, like now, there were no films being made because there was no money in them, like now, and there was a Federal election coming up. As an election ploy the Fraser Government thought up a scheme to make businessmen want to invest in films, and announced it before the election, which they narrowly won. Under the scheme you could invest, say, $10,000 in a film, and claim in return $15,000 off your tax. If the film then earned you, say, $5000, you paid tax on only $2500 of it and you kept the rest, tax-free.

This was an offer no-one could refuse, and an avalanche of money — not all of it clean — poured into films in the early months of 1981, before the relevant law had been passed by Federal parliament. In May 1981 Treasurer John Howard, in some panic, went back on his previous announcement and said the tax dodge only applied henceforth to the year in which the films were completed and earning money.

He did this partly to prevent the making of too many films, which the Treasury in their usual innumerate way had warned him was costing them a lot of money in uncollected tax (forgetting that the money that goes into films goes mainly into wages, on which tax is then paid in the usual way), and partly to stop the dirty money from pouring down that particular hole. But the effect of this move was devastating; it is the cause of our present ruin. All it takes, as Tennyson nearly said, is one good intention to corrupt the world.

It happened like this. The tax year runs from July 1 to June 30. So in the normal way of business the time when you, the investor, want to dispose of the money you do not wish to pay tax on is after December, in February or March or even later. But in order to get the tax dodge on your money you have to finish your film by June 30. Now from the start of pre-production to the showing of the film takes about six months — some would say at least that. So films had to start production in December or January at the latest in order to be finished in time for the deadline of June 30. Earlier would be better of course — July or August, preferably — so they could make the Cannes Film Festival (the industry's biggest showcase), but money wasn't available till December of January or March. You see the problem.

> Most of these films now cost over two million dollars, whereas two years ago they would have cost under $800,000

So the net result was that all the films that got their money were made at the same time, in December and January, so they could be finished in June. This meant if your were, say, a cameraman or a film editor you could only work on one film a year. Normally you could work on three. This meant the film technicians in order to survive (or, as they say, maintain their living standards) put up their prices; and the actors, directors and producers avidly followed suit. Prices for everyone soon doubled, and budgets went up a million and a quarter, then a million and a half, then two million. On top of this came the money charged by the newly cocky accountants for raising the money — an extra two or three hundred thousand. And the insurance. And the contingency. All of which went up in the same proportion as the budget. Ten percent of two million is two hundred thousand. And that is only the contingency. So *Newsfront,* which in 1976 cost $506,00, would now cost $2,200,000. If the June 30 deadline hadn't been there it wouldn't have happened, God blast it. And now it's too late.

Inflation has logic of its own. You put up your price because everyone else is putting up their prices and then, because you know the higher prices will wreck the line of work you're currently in, you put up your price even more, to provide for the year when you'll be out of work because you put up your price in the first place. This happened in the film industry. Producers accustomed to getting 20 or 30 thousand a year were paying themselves 110 thousand a year. Actors like Judy Davis were offered eight times the total budget of *Love Letters From Teralba Road,* and because they too sensed the film industry was now at an end, they thought this a fair price for their services. They might not see the likes of that kind of money again.

So film budgets were now at two million and rising, and return on those budgets was as low as 300 thousand, after television sales and advertising costs, partly because there were so *many* Australian movies jostling for space that no-one knew which one to go to, and partly because there was a recession on and no-one was going to the movies anyway. It was cheaper to hire a videotape and watch it over a can of beer in your own living room. Put your feet up. Wriggle your toes.

Then the worst thing of all happened, which was UAA.

UAA is a West Australian company which noticed an anomaly in the Tax Act — the now infamous clause 51(1), which allowed Australian investors through a complicated series of manoeuvres to write off 375 percent, against tax, of the money they put into overseas films. UAA thus funded *Arthur, War Games, The Year of Living Dangerously,* and *Superman III.* The deal was that UAA would put up one dollar for every four dollars the Americans put up, and it got the tax write-off for its investors but in return had to give up creative control ot the movies to the Americans, which didn't worry anybody at all.

Right. Now picture the scene. You are an investor. You have money to get rid of. You can get a 150 percent write-off for putting it into an Australian film, or a 375 percent write-off for putting it into an American film. Which option are you going to choose? Patriotism, as Edith Cavell said on her way to the firing squad, is not enough.

John Howard, apprised of this wicked anomaly, made three announcements to the effect that tax write-offs on this scheme would be disallowed. No-one believed him. He had promised good things before.

But UAA, sensing the danger it was in, began a desperate attempt to give its multinational operation an Australian face. It offered to put money into the Phil Noyce film *The Umbrella Woman,* starring Judy Davis, and tried to tee it up with its American partners, MGM. "Sure," said MGM, but only if the roles of the umbrella woman's two young sons were greatly expanded and rewritten so they could be played by Americans. "How can this be?" asked the producer, Margaret Kelly, "Well, maybe they lived in America for a while," said MGM. "Maybe they went there on a Rotary scholarship."

UAA was asked if Australian actors could audition for any of the American films that it was making with Australian money. "Only if they pass the accent test," said UAA. "They have to speak with an American accent." "Even if the role is Australian?" asked Equity. "Even if the role is Australian," said UAA.

UAA has taken $28 million a year from happy Australians to invest in American films. Of this they themselves keep $7 million. You can see why they're keen to go on doing it. Their investors, for every $100,000 they spend, can write off $375,000 against tax. No legislation has yet been passed to stop them. In the meantime the Australian film industry is dying.

"Nonsense," says UAA. "The Australian film industry is evolving." Into a more internationally commercial one, with American accents, and American scriptwriters, and American directors, and overseas locations. In what sense can it then be said to be Australian? We may well ask. "Ah," says UAA, "because it's all done with Australian money."

People used to go to war to preserve their culture. They fought the Battle of Britain for it, and the Battle of the Coral Sea. It was thought that it was worth keeping things the way they were; that in cultural difference was health, and that cultural individuality was a good thing. This is no longer so. We should change our nature as market forces dictate: this is the current wisdom. Starring Tab Hunter and Troy Donahue as Jules and Jim. Paul Newman as *Tom Jones.* Silvester Stallone in *Newsfront.* Richard Prior in *Jimmy Blacksmith.*

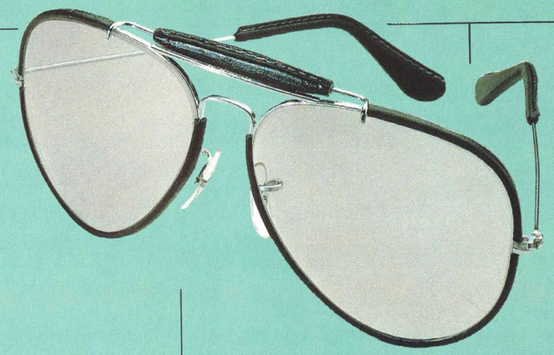
I do not believe this. But probably I am wrong. I must be. I'm starving. Of course I could compromise, like everyone else has. "Each one hopes," Winston Churchill said, "that if he feeds the crocodile enough, the crocodile will eat him last." And all of them hope the end will come before they are consumed. It never has. It never will.

Poor film industry. Poor sad insecure greedy people that we are. We had it made, and then we threw it away. To the jackals.

Things may improve, of course. As I write this, moves are being made to have the June deadline altered, and that will help a little — but too little, I fear, and too late. I feel we're on the downward slide, and my wife and I have to go elsewhere to earn a living. The pity of it is the scripts we wrote were very good, and would have enlarged the image of our country in the eyes of the world. They are just paper now, in a drawer in a desk, and a dream in the minds of the dying.

Maybe they will rise again. I doubt it.

LOOSE ENDS



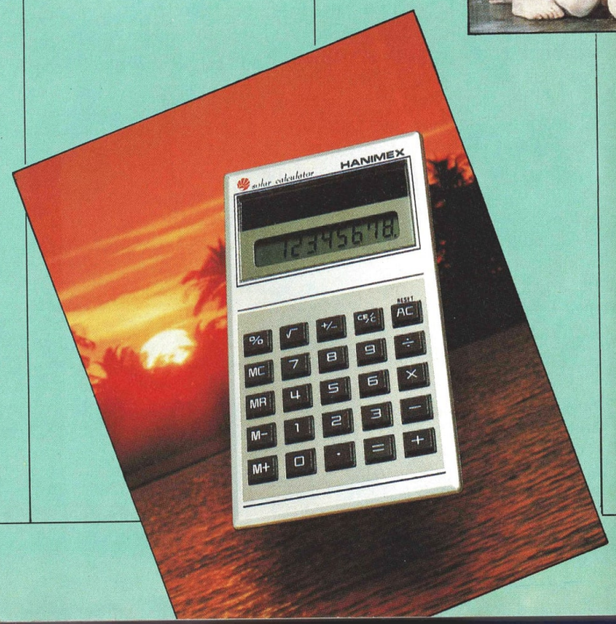
Be framed in style with the Dunhill Eyewear Collection. This new range consists of two spectacle frames for prescription lenses and three classic sunglass models. Priced from $120, the frames are light and retain their glossy, ritzy look permanently. Available from Dunhill shops, optometrists and selected sunglasses outlets.

Qantas has introduced holidays at Bali's newest beach club — Respati. The nine or 16-day packages start at $680 — a price which includes flight, most meals, a range of sporting and recreation activities and accommodation in fully air-conditioned cottage-style rooms with private facilities. More info from Qantas or CBR tours on 02 239 5095.

European men have been eating quiche and having facials for years but have you ever heard anyone accuse Jean-Paul Belmondo of not being a Real Man? Ella Bache cosmetics cater for Aussie men who are hanging up their hang-ups by providing a skincare range which includes soothing aftershave, skin balm, cleanser, blackhead remover, corrective ointment and sun-screen. Bache For Men is available from Ella Bache Institutes and David Jones in Sydney and beauticians throughout Australia.

With Auto-Focus and Auto-Strobe, the new Polaroid SLR 680 is the state of the art in instant cameras. The camera hailed as a miracle a decade ago has kept up with expanding technology and now boasts articulated flash and automatic focusing from 26cm to infinity.

If your lady has got it, encourage her to flaunt it with Triumph body fashions. Priced from $14.99 for bras and camisoles up to $24.99 for sexy cami-knickers, these frillies are scene stealers. Available at major department stores across Australia.



Pockets full of sunshine with the new range of Hanimex solar cell calculators. These personal and desk models operate on direct or indirect natural light or fluorescent and incandescent light for indoor operation. They need only as much light as you do for comfortable reading. The metric calculator, $24, features 40 metric conversion functions — great for household, business or school.

It's happening on the other side of the world but these pictures caught our eyes. It's the all-women oriental dance troupe Buto. Lots of Deep and Meaningful themes acted out with lots of writhing entwined bodies. Londoners are raving about these little ladies. Shades of things to come on the local theatre scene?

What do you get when you cross a cask of wine with an Esky — apart from getting laid out cold? Try a Lindemans Chilly Pack, the handy re-usable polystyrene container holding four litres of Lindemans reisling or moselle. Selling now at leading liquor outlets for around $8.99.

COMING IN MARCH AUSTRALIAN PENTHOUSE

Pet of the Year — The votes are in and Australia's Pet of the Year presents herself in eight stunning pages of Chris Dickson's photography. She's a fitting winner of some fabulous prizes . . . and you'll find out who she is next month.

Arms for the Poor — A large part of the world economy is dependent on the arms industry and after the Falkland Islands demonstration showcase, business is booming. In this frightening feature, top investigative journalist Adrian Tame teamed with physicist and anti-nuclear activist F.P.J. Robotham to present a guide to the nasty weapons available to any country that wants them.

Surf-Lifesaving — The popular image of Australia's surf-lifesavers is of bronzed, super-fit heroes of the beaches, protecting swimmers from surf and sharks. But there's another image — of boozing, beer guts and riotous romps at clubhouses. Margot Barlow looks at the two faces of the surf club lifesaver and finds some severe shortcomings in the system.

Confessions of a Waiter — Silver service makes a hilarious subject for noted humorist Adam Bowen, who donned a penguin suit and joined the kitchen-mayhem set for this light-hearted look at the dangers of working as a part-time waiter.

Buy Me, Try Me — Male prostitution, in the form of escorts for women, is a subject that could only be investigated by a lady who knows the other side of the coin. So *Penthouse* sent writer and ex-hooker Sallie-Ann Huckstepp out to buy — and try — the goods, with unexpected results.

No Fixed Address — Rock writer Roger Crosthwaite profiles the aboriginal band which has won popularity around Australia and fought sheer red-necked racism all the way. Their music and thought-provoking lyrics might offend some, but their climb up the charts is significant for race relations in Australia.

Mike Willesee Interview — He has been at the top of television in Australia, and at the bottom — according to the daily newspapers. Phil Abraham interviewed the media man who has become as much a product of the media as he is a producer.

Pet of the Month — Top photographer Walter Glover captures New Zealand born Wendy Maree on film for another stunning Australian centrespread.

HIGH ON MONEY

Continued from page 93

by 10 points. In the wind-up segment, he strides through the array of glittering prizes like a triumphant soldier of fortune, giving each item an affectionate caress before moving on . . . and as the cameras pan in for the finale, with Stan resting one hand tenderly on the $95,000 Cash Jackpot and waving furiously with the other, it's just possible to make out the little tears of joy welling up in those tired old eyes. In the last poignant scene — one which would have served as a fitting epilogue had it been captured by the camermen — Victoria walks casually over to the losing contestants and moves her hand up and down, an inch in front of my glazed eyeballs . . . "Are you all right, Greg? You seemed to be off in dreamland for a while there . . ."

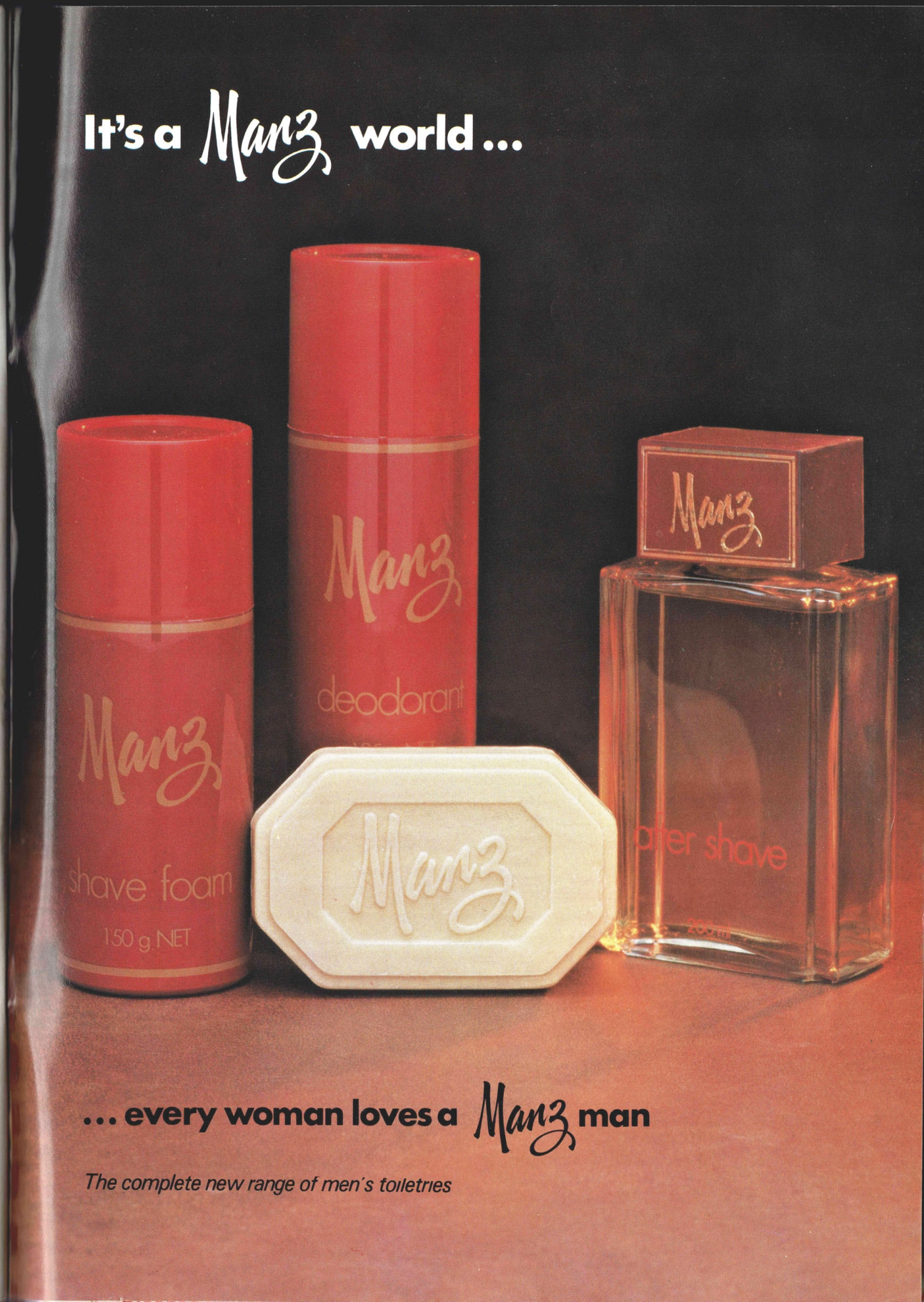
In the very next game Stan met his nemesis — the $25 Bonus. He must have had nightmares about that all week. It can only be hoped that his wife was able to take a sympathetic view . . .

In my case, the horror of going home to face the music was delayed until screening time, two weeks later. I watched with morbid fascination this grotesque creature masquerading as myself on national television . . . then skipped out to let the boys handle the initial wave of calls from shocked relatives . . . ("He didn't do too badly . . . but what about . . . *his eyes* . . . I've never seen them looking like that before . . . and what about . . . *the mouth* . . .")

The oddest thing about this great Gonzoesque farce — this Savage Journey to the Heart of the Australian Dream — was that it didn't turn out to be that at all. In retrospect, it was more of a journey to the heart of . . . *the self.* So many of us think we're immune to the Evil Forces which motivate those who find their way onto *Sale Of The Century.* So we come to loathe the very existence of this insult to our sensibilities . . . and yet, when the Camera rolls, the Colored Lights flash and the Buzzers buzz to signify that megabucks are up for grabs, and the first nerve-tingling wave of adrenalin starts to creep right up into the frontal lobes, no-one who has Been There and lived to tell the tale can deny the *sheer hysterical excitement* of being in it with all guns blazing in a flight to the death . . . and that's why we are going to have to live with *Sale Of The Century,* or something very, very similar to it, until a new Master Species takes control of planet Earth . . . OH

STOCKISTS

Centrespread: Make-up by Chris King; Clothes from Nelder-Jones, Paddington and Double Bay; Cushions from Smoked Salmon, Woollahra; Television courtesy of Sony Pty Ltd. All in NSW.



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